



## **Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session, Prayers and Commands<sup>1</sup> to Neutralize Demonic Interference**

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**2025 preface:** Much of this essay was written in 2001. So you may notice that some of the material feels subtly different from our more recent teaching. For example, our overall approach to ministry has become much more relational in the twenty-plus years since 2001. I have also developed the Immanuel Approach since 2001, and as the reader probably realizes, the Immanuel Approach places much more emphasis on helping the recipient to engage directly with the living, tangible, interactive presence of Jesus at every point in the process and regarding every issue, problem, question, and traumatic memory that comes up.

A very practical, good-news ramification of the Immanuel Approach piece is that a facilitator with only the most basic understanding regarding demonic interference/opposition can expose and resolve demonic blockages if the recipient has a strong connection with Jesus. For example, if the facilitator and recipient notice that the session seems to be stuck and they have no idea why, instead of using the prayers and commands for exposing demonic interference, extracting information regarding the blockage, and then resolving it, they can just engage directly with Jesus. This scenario might look like the following:

Recip: “I feel like somehow we’re stuck. I’m not going to an underlying memory, and I’m not getting any thoughts or emotions. I just feel stuck somehow.”

Facil: “Well, I’m thinking you should focus on Jesus, ask Him for guidance and help regarding what’s in the way, and then notice and report whatever comes into your awareness.”

Recip: (*Focusing on Jesus*), “Okay Jesus, I feel stuck and I don’t know what’s in the way. Could You please help? Could You give us guidance and help about what’s in the way?”

(*Pause.*) “Wow. This is kinda weird. I’m hearing an angry voice saying, ‘F\*\*\* You Jesus.’ And the voice kind of feels like it’s not coming from me. The thought comes to me that maybe it’s demonic.”

Facil: “In the name of Jesus, any demonic spirits present must reveal exactly and only what Jesus requires you to reveal. And if this voice is actually coming from an internal part of \_\_\_\_\_ (recip’s name), then please come forward and help us understand why you’re so angry.”

Recip: “The angry voice just said, ‘I can be here because you don’t really want to go to the memory, and you don’t want to forgive your father!’ And I think Jesus is showing me that it’s true – I am afraid to go to the memory, and I don’t want to forgive my father.”

Facil: “In the name of Jesus, we command any demonic spirits present to be bound. You may not hinder \_\_\_\_\_ (recip’s name) from getting help from Jesus, and you must go and deal

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<sup>1</sup> We pray to the Lord. We do not pray to demonic spirits – we stand in the authority of Jesus and tell them what to do.

with Jesus directly for any way in which you have chosen to disobey our earlier commands from the opening prayer.”

To recipient: “Now, if you’re willing, I want you to focus on Jesus and talk to Him directly about being afraid to go the memory, and about not wanting to forgive your father. And ask Him for more guidance and help.”

*And then the session starts moving forward again as the recipient engages directly with Jesus regarding these blockages. And at the end of the session, after the underlying trauma has been resolved, the demonic infection is easily removed as part of the usual Immanuel Approach closing prayer.*

Even if the recipient does *not* have a particularly strong connection with the Lord, you can start facilitating basic sessions without needing to know any of the principles and interventions describe below for dealing with demonic interference during the session. As long as you make sure to include the opening prayer at the beginning of the session, you can facilitate many basic sessions without the issue of dealing with demonic interference during the session ever even coming up.<sup>2</sup> And if you encounter something that you think might be demonic, and the recipient does not have a strong connection with Jesus so that you cannot use the very simple approach just describe above, you can come back and look at this material at that time (and/or you can get a consultation from a more experienced facilitator).

### **I. Introductory comments:**

We perceive that this careful approach to dealing with demonic spirits will be especially helpful for individuals or teams that are just beginning emotional healing ministry.

This material may seem complicated to those who have not yet had much experience with demonic interference. Feel free to go slowly, and to take the time to read the instructions in the sample prayers and commands during the session. Our expectation is that most will be pleasantly surprised by how quickly it all starts to make sense. If this material continues to seem confusing and overwhelming, check for triggering and/or demonic interference in yourself.

***Note regarding demonic spirits and internal parts:***<sup>3</sup> Throughout this essay, we always discuss the possibility of interference from internal parts as part of discussing possible interference from demonic spirits because both of these phenomenon are common and they can be easily mistaken for each other. We have seen wounded, scared, angry, deceived, and even demonized internal parts manifest with just about every “demonic” presentation you can think of. Occasionally internal parts will even claim to be demonic spirits. Therefore, whenever we encounter interference that we think might be demonic, we always ask the question, “Could this be an internal dissociated part?” We have also seen demonic spirits try to present as internal parts. They pretend to be internal parts with legitimate concerns that need to be addressed, but they always have “just one more” concern, and never get around to actually allowing the process to

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<sup>2</sup> For example, with most of the basic and intermediate sessions in our Live Ministry Series, we go through the whole session, including finding and resolving traumatic memories, without the issue of demonic interference during the session ever even coming up.

<sup>3</sup> For a brief discussion of internal parts, see the “dissociation” and “child parts” entries in the glossary of *The Immanuel Approach: For Emotional Healing and for Life*. For a much more detailed discussion, see Section II, “Different Types of Traumatic Memory,” in the essay, “Brain Science, Emotional Trauma, and The God Who is With Us, Part VI: Special Subjects & Frequently Asked Questions.” (Available as a free download from “Special Subjects/Advanced Topics” section, Resources page, [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com)).

continue. Therefore, whenever we encounter an “internal part” that persistently hinders the healing work in any way, we ask the question, “Could this be a demonic spirit?” The essay “Distinguishing Between Demonic Spirits and Internal Dissociated Parts”<sup>4</sup> discusses this question at greater length, and describes two simple techniques/tools that we have found very helpful in differentiating internal parts from demonic spirits.

***Our experience has been changing (new 10/9/2003):*** We found the principles and prayers described in this essay to be especially valuable early in our learning journey regarding demonic interference/opposition. However, it is important to note that our experience changed dramatically between the time we first wrote this essay and 2003. By 2003, we seldom dealt directly with demonic spirits during emotional healing ministry sessions, and this pattern has continued to the present (2025). See “Our changing experience in dealing with the demonic” (section VII, below), for additional observations and discussion.

## **II. When/where do we use these prayers and commands? How do we identify demonic interference/opposition during prayer for emotional healing sessions?**

- A. *Part of the tool box when the process isn't moving:*** Sometimes the process isn't moving – something is stuck – but there is no clear reason. Using the prayers and commands below to test for demonic interference is one part of going through the troubleshooting “tool box.” We often start with the prayers and commands below when the process is stuck “for no apparent reason” because interfering demonic spirits can provide useful information about all the contributing pieces (if there are demonic spirits interfering with the process in any way, the Lord will often require them to provide information about parts, vows, guardian lies, and any other contributing problems).<sup>5</sup> Note: In our experience, this quiet interference with no obvious indication of demonic presence is the most common presentation (perhaps in western culture, the enemy gets more mileage out of being invisible than out of being intimidating).<sup>6</sup>
- B. *Subjective sense that something is “blocking” the process:*** Sometimes we and/or the person receiving ministry perceive that something is “blocking” the process. The person receiving ministry will often make comments such as “Everything just went black,” “It feels like ‘something’/‘someone’ is in the way,” or “It feels like something is trying to block what we are doing.” Unusual intensity of negative emotions – especially intense fear about continuing the process, unusual confusion, persistent distraction, and sudden sleepiness are other common presentations.

When this occurs, the first four things we check for are internal parts, demonic spirits, vows, and guardian lies. Internal parts and/or demonic spirits often feel like *somebody* is intentionally opposing/interfering with the process. Look especially for guardian lies if the person focuses on the sense that something is “blocking” the process and then perceives reluctance to continue the process in their own heart. Look especially for vows if the person

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<sup>4</sup> Available as a free download from the “Special Subjects/Advanced Topics” section of the Resources page of [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com).

<sup>5</sup> Again, with the Immanuel Approach, if the recipient has a good connection with Jesus you can just ask Jesus for guidance and help regarding why the session seems to be stuck, and Jesus can give you the information you need. It is much more relational, easier, and much more pleasant to get help from Jesus than to use the sample prayers and commands to extract information from demonic spirits.

<sup>6</sup> Those with experience in third-world cultures report a higher frequency of obvious/dramatic/high profile demonic manifestations.

experiences unexplained and persistent anxiety and/or confusion – like they are breaking some internal law – as they try to push into the healing work. As mentioned above, prayers to expose demonic interference and commands for them to reveal what the Lord requires can be especially valuable because the Lord often requires them to provide information about all the other contributing problems.

**C. *Involuntary, spontaneous physical phenomena:*** Spontaneous, involuntary physical phenomena<sup>7</sup> can indicate interference from demonic spirits. Spontaneous involuntary physical phenomena can also be coming from internal parts, physical memory, or manifestations of the Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup> I think towards the Holy Spirit as the source if the phenomena appears to be a blessing (for example, gentle shaking with a smile, or uninhibited crying). I think away from the Holy Spirit if the person receiving ministry displays phenomena that appear unpleasant and/or that they report are unpleasant (for example, grimacing, groaning, growling, or bodily contortions). I especially consider demonic spirits and/or internal parts if the physical phenomena are closely associated with the negative emotions, thoughts, images, internal voices, and impulses described below. One manifestation that has always been associated with demonic spirits and/or angry, oppositional internal parts is facial twitching that eventually coalesces into an unmistakable snarl. This is usually accompanied by emotions of hatred, angry/threatening/violent thoughts, and angry/ threatening/violent voices in the person’s mind.

Note that if the physical phenomena are coming from an internal part, a physical memory, or the Holy Spirit, it does not hurt the client, the internal part, or the Holy Spirit to use the prayers and commands below to *test* the *possibility* of demonic origin.

**D. *Onset of pain during the prayer for emotional healing session:*** Recipients will sometimes experience sudden onset of pain in various parts of the body. This can be caused by emotional pain that is being expressed through the body, physical memory, demonic spirits, or internal parts. When I encounter this scenario, the first thing I do is encourage the recipient to focus on the pain – if it is the expression of underlying emotions, focusing on the physical pain will often help them connect more directly with the emotional pain; if it is part of a memory, focusing on the pain will often help the recipient move into the rest of the memory; and if it is coming from an internal part that is trying to come forward into consciousness, focusing on the pain will often help the part come forward.

Simply focusing on the pain can also help to uncover demonic spirits and/or internal parts that are trying to block the process. If the pain persists and the session is not moving forward, I use the prayers and commands below to help sort out the possibility that the pain is an indicator of opposition from demonic spirits and/or internal parts. And again, if it turns out that demonic spirits are *not* contributing, it does not hurt the person receiving ministry to use these prayers and commands to *test* for *possible* demonic interference.

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<sup>7</sup> For example, sudden twitching, jerking, grunting, facial grimacing, or bodily contortions. See “EMDR® , Traumatic Memories, and Physical Phenomena” for additional description and discussion of physical phenomena we have observed during prayer for emotional healing sessions. (Available as a free download from the “kclehman.com Website Archives” section of the Resources page of [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com).)

<sup>8</sup> See “Physical Behavior, Phenomena, and Manifestations: ‘Pressure Leaks’ that can Hinder Prayer for Emotional Healing” and “Physical Behavior, Phenomena, and Manifestations: Summary & Practical Applications” for additional discussion of this differential. (Available as free downloads from the “kclehman.com Website Archives” section of the Resources page of [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com).)

**E. *Negative emotions, thoughts, images, and impulses:*** Negative emotions, thoughts, images, and impulses that come on suddenly, are surprisingly intense, or that have content that is unusual/inappropriate for the person receiving ministry are common presentations of interference from demonic spirits/internal parts. The more sudden, intense, and unusual/inappropriate the material is, the more we think towards demonic spirits and/or internal parts. For example, a client who is usually friendly, cooperative, and appropriate might report: “I suddenly have this impulse to hit you,” “I am feeling this intense anger/hatred towards you, but I know it is irrational,” or “I keep thinking ‘This is stupid – what a worthless waste of money. You’re an idiot!’” The more persistent and distracting/embarrassing/intimidating the material is, the more I think towards demonic spirits and/or internal parts. For example, a stream of swear words might come into the person’s thoughts, or she might see violent, obscene, or other negative mental images. Explicit violent thoughts, impulses, and images towards the therapist/minister tend to be especially upsetting, and explicit sexual thoughts, impulses, and images are especially embarrassing. (Demons and/or really angry internal parts tend to fight dirty). Sometimes the person will see images of frightening/loathsome beings, and the images will often be speaking negative content.

The person receiving ministry can usually perceive that the emotions, thoughts, images, and impulses are not coming from their normal/usual adult mind/consciousness. Especially if you ask them about this point, they will usually report something along the lines of, “This stuff somehow feels like it’s not coming from *me* – it feels like it’s coming from somewhere else,...or something else,...or someone else.” However, demonic and/or internal parts phenomena can sometimes be subtle, and some recipients have not yet learned to distinguish the differences between these subtle phenomena and content from their usual/normal adult consciousness. In these situations, the recipients will initially perceive that the content is just coming from their own minds.

**F. *Thoughts with unusual pronouns – plural, second person, and third person:*** Thoughts with first person plural pronouns (“*We* are going to kill Dr. Lehman,” “Leave *us* alone”), and/or referring to the client with second person pronouns (“*You* will never get free,” “*You* don’t deserve to be healed”) or third person pronouns (“*She’s* ours – you can’t have *her* – we’re not going to let *her* go”) are especially strong indicators of demonic spirits and/or internal parts. Note: As obvious as these pronoun clues might seem, people receiving ministry often will not catch them until they speak the thoughts out loud. (This is yet another reason why it is so important to coach recipients to describe *whatever* is coming into their awareness).

**G. *Internal voices:*** Internal voices are one of the strongest indicators of demonic spirits and/or internal parts, and they are often associated with one or more of the other phenomena described above. The person receiving ministry might report “I hear lots of different voices screaming and swearing inside my head,” or “I feel really angry at you, I see these hideous faces, and I hear voices saying ‘We hate you, Dr. Lehman’,” or “I hear this voice inside my head telling me that I am filthy and that God doesn’t want to heal me,” or “I am having a lot of pain in my head, and I hear a voice yelling ‘I won’t let go’.”

Note: Recipients are often very hesitant to report internal voices. Guardian lies are common. For example, I have worked with recipients who were initially very reluctant to report their internal mental content, but after I guessed that they might be hearing internal voices, explained that this was actually pretty common, explained that internal voices were usually *not* being caused by mental illness, and then helped them ask for help from Jesus regarding their guardian-lie fears, they reported various blocking thoughts/fears, such as, “It’s not safe

to tell about the voices because you will think I'm crazy," or "If I tell anybody about the voices, they will lock me up," or "If I tell anybody about the voices, I will go to the state hospital just like my aunt."

**2025 addition:** More Immanuel Approach good news is that once you have helped the recipient to focus and articulate her blocking fears, you can help her talk directly to Jesus and ask for help regarding her fears. For most people (maybe 75%?), the fears will decrease dramatically within a few minutes with just this simple intervention.

People have asked "How can I tell the difference between an internal voice and just perceiving thoughts in the mind?" A simple way to tell the difference is that people can describe more details regarding an internal voice – they can tell you whether it is loud or soft, clear or garbled, male or female, harsh or gentle, etc. They might be able to describe whether a thought is clear or vague, strong or weak, but thoughts don't come with vocal quality or gender.

Distinguishing *internal* voices from *external* voices can help differentiate between demonic spirits/internal parts and psychotic mental illness. External voices feel subjectively like they are coming from outside the person's head. Internal voices feel subjectively like they are coming from inside the person's head. If I am in a room with you and you close your eyes, you can point to my location in the room whenever I speak. In the same way, persons who are hearing external voices can close their eyes and point to a location outside themselves where they perceive the voices to be coming from. A person who is hearing internal voices will point to his/her head, or simply comment something like "They're inside my head." This simple distinction is very valuable because in my experience *internal* voices are common and are almost always<sup>9</sup> demonic spirits or internal parts. *External* voices are rare, are never internal parts, and can be auditory hallucinations coming from schizophrenia or some other psychotic mental illness.<sup>10</sup> Summarizing from another angle:

- Internal parts present only as *internal* voices;
- *Auditory hallucinations* from psychotic mental illnesses are always *external* voices, and psychotic mental illnesses very rarely include *internal* voices as a part of *delusions*;
- Demonic spirits are usually internal voices, but can be either (just as demonic images are usually internal mental images, but on very rare occasions can be external visual images).

**H. Open, first person opposition:** The clearest indication that you need the prayers and commands below is when the person's facial expression changes and a demonic spirit and/or internal part speaks in the first person, openly opposing the prayer for emotional healing: "This is a stupid waste of time and money," "I won't let you get to this memory," or, "F\_\_\_ you Dr. Lehman." As with internal thoughts, first person plural pronouns ("*We* hate you"), and/or referring to the client with second or third person pronouns ("God doesn't love *you*," "*She* wants us to stay") are especially strong indicators of demonic spirits and/or internal parts. Note that this open, first person manifestation of demonic spirits and/or dissociated parts is rare. Most interference from demonic spirits and/or internal parts presents in the more

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<sup>9</sup> A rare psychotic patient will have non-demonic/parts internal voices as a component of a delusional system. In my experience, most internal voices reported by psychotic patients have turned out to be demonic spirits and/or internal parts that were also present (in addition to the psychotic mental illness).

<sup>10</sup> If the person receiving ministry is experiencing external voices, it would be good to consider mental health consultation to help evaluate the possibility of psychotic mental illness.

subtle forms described above.

### III. Why do we still encounter demonic interference during the session, even after the opening prayer?:

As I have thought about the opening prayer/commands, and then also dealing with demonic phenomena during the session, I have wondered “Why do we encounter demonic interference during the session? Why do we have to pray during the session to deal with demonic opposition? Shouldn’t the thorough initial prayer take care of this?” My guess is that many others will have these same questions. Several thoughts:

**A. *General prayer vs specific prayer:*** Many who have studied and practiced intercessory prayer report that general prayers are good (“Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”), but that it is also necessary to offer specific, focused prayers in certain situations (“Lord, please free my daughter from these seizures”). Even Jesus seems to demonstrate this principle. He taught us to pray “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (about as general an intercessory prayer as one could find), but then also offered specific, focused prayers in different situations (e.g., intercession for the disciples before his crucifixion). Our experience is that general prayers at the beginning of ministry sessions are not sufficient to neutralize demonic strongholds anchored in deep emotional wounds.

The behavior of children provides an analogy. You can call out to a whole room full of children, asking them to be quiet. This will usually bring some order to the situation. But if there is one child who is having special difficulty, it is necessary to walk up to his desk, look him in the eye, and ask him to sit quietly so that you can talk to the class. Physical injury provides another good analogy. When somebody is in an accident, antibiotics by mouth (systemic) can help prevent local infections from spreading, but they will not remove the dirt and bacteria in the wounds that are scattered over the person’s body. The dirt and bacteria need to be removed from each wound at the site of the wound. Demonic infection of psychological wounds seems to be another<sup>11</sup> example in which a problem can be addressed generally from a distance, but then must be addressed again in a more focused way when you are closer to the problem. Systemic demonic “antibiotics<sup>12</sup>” are good, but my experience is that it is also necessary to clean the demonic “dirt and bacteria” from each cluster of related traumatic memories when you get to the specific memories.

**B. *The person may be “shielding” the enemy:*** The opening prayer at the beginning of the session may be ineffective in neutralizing certain demonic spirits because the person is shielding the resistant spirits from the authority of the prayer. For example, demonic spirits can hide behind vows or in dissociated memories. Demonic spirits are especially resistant to prayer if an internal part is giving them permission to interfere. (The spiritual authority of your prayer cannot overrule the authority of the recipient’s free-will choice to allow the demonic spirits to stay.) These demonic spirits can continue to interfere with the healing work, in spite of the initial prayer, until their “shields” are removed.

**C. *Things change during the session:*** It is necessary to pray during the session to deal with

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<sup>11</sup> See “Judgements and Bitterness as Clutter that Hinders Emotional Healing for discussion of this pattern with respect to bitterness.

<sup>12</sup> For example, thorough opening prayer at the beginning of the session or prayer to address overarching patterns of demonic oppression in the person’s life and family.

demonic interference because things change during the session. If the recipient releases vows during the session, the demonic spirits hiding behind those vows can be dealt with at that point. If internal parts bring a dissociated memory forward during the session, the demonic spirits in that memory no longer have the protection the person was giving them by hiding the memory. If internal parts renounce complicity and agree to fully cooperate with prayer, the demonic spirits they are shielding can be dealt with at that point in the session.

**D. *The Lord may be requiring demonic spirits to manifest during the session in order to provide information:*** Our initial prayer is, “We command you to manifest only as Jesus requires and allows” not, “We forbid you from manifesting in any way.” It has occurred to me that the Lord may allow some demonic manifestation during the session (in accordance with our initial prayer) because it is His best plan to provide information and lead us more quickly to the work He wants us to do.

**E. *Steadily increasing effectiveness:*** The above comments still make sense regarding why the opening prayer does not completely eliminate demonic phenomena later in the session, but it is also interesting to note that we have been seeing less and less demonic phenomena during the session. As discussed below, my perception is that the power/effectiveness of laying down simple demonic parameters in an opening prayer has steadily increased as I have grown in faith and experiential authority.

#### **IV. Binding, exposing, obtaining information, prohibiting interference, but not deliverance:**

The primary purpose of the sample prayers and commands included in this document is to neutralize demonic interference during prayer for emotional healing sessions. These prayers and commands are not intended to provide permanent deliverance from demonic oppression and harassment. My perception is that harassing/oppressing demonic spirits are usually anchored to unresolved trauma and issues associated with unresolved trauma.<sup>13</sup> If deliverance prayer is attempted before these underlying issues are resolved, the demonic spirits leave temporarily but then come back easily.<sup>14</sup> A “window” for re-entry seems to open whenever something triggers the trauma and associated issues that the demonic spirits previously infected, and this is especially true if the person receiving ministry responds to the activated toxic content with sinful behavior. I therefore agree with many others that it is best to bind demonic spirits until the underlying wounds and associated issues have been resolved. At this point the harassing/oppressing demonic spirits can be removed easily, and they will not return.<sup>15</sup>

**V. Pray with authority, but be aware of the conditions under which demonic spirits can disobey:** As mentioned above, there are a number of situations in which demonic spirits can refuse to obey our commands. For example, an internal part can give demonic spirits permission to stay and to disobey, the person receiving ministry choosing to continue in sin (either willful sin or sinful defenses like vows and judgments) can give demonic spirits permission to stay and to disobey, and demonic spirits can choose to defy without any legitimate right to do so (knowing

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<sup>13</sup> For example, bitterness & judgments, vows, denial, and internal parts allowing demonic presence in exchange for strengthened defenses.

<sup>14</sup> Most ministers experienced in prayer for emotional healing seem to agree on this point. See, for example, Francis MacNutt *Deliverance From Evil Spirits*, p.182-195, and Charles Kraft *Deep Wounds, Deep Healing* p.255-273, *Defeating Dark Angels* p.119-156, 177-198.

<sup>15</sup> See “Closing Prayer” for additional comments regarding this point and for a sample prayer to permanently remove demonic spirits. (Available as a free download from [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com))



that they will have to deal with Jesus directly if the prayer minister knows enough to enforce their commands). This reality that there are a number of situations in which demonic spirits can disobey caused me considerable confusion as I was learning to deal with demonic interference. “How can I be confident in my authority in Christ when the demonic spirits successfully defy me on a regular basis? I look like a fool, claiming to have all this authority, when they just laugh in response to some of my commands.”

This confusion was based on the incorrect understanding that having confidence in my authority required that I *know, with complete certainty*, that the demonic spirits in question would always obey my commands. The correct understanding is that having confidence in my authority requires that I *know, with complete certainty*, that the Lord is present, good, and victorious over all demonic spirits, that He will be faithful to the principles and rules He has established to govern creation (including demonic spirits), that He has given me authority to enforce these principles and rules, and that demonic spirits *will* comply with my commands unless there is some other more important consideration involved.

My confidence is *not* based on my ability to understand all the spiritual principles and rules governing demonic spirits, make commands consistent with these principles and rules, see into the spiritual realm and be able to tell when demonic spirits are disobeying my commands, and then discipline them whenever they disobey. I explicitly ask the Lord to help the recipient and me to understand the spiritual principles and rules that govern demonic spirits, and to help us issue commands that are consistent with these principles and rules. I ask the Lord to be the judge regarding demonic compliance and to deal with demonic disobedience whenever it occurs. And I ask the Lord to help me discern the principles and rules involved whenever demonic spirits fail to obey my commands so that I can find and remove whatever is allowing the demonic spirits to disobey. It feels like my growing confidence in my authority is coming from growing confidence that the Lord will do these things.

My experience with confidence in my authority to deal with demonic spirits has been similar to my experience with “faith” in the Lord to heal in response to my prayers. The incorrect understanding, which resulted in much confusion and self condemnation, was “having faith means *knowing, with complete confidence*, that the person will be healed when I pray for them.” The correct understanding is “having faith means *knowing, with complete confidence*, that the Lord is present, good, and able to heal, that He is faithful to the principles and rules which He has established to govern creation, and that He *will* answer my prayer for healing if there is not some other more important consideration involved.”

It has been helpful for me to think of analogies. We deal with similar situations in “regular” life everyday. For example, a person will say to an employee: “Come to my office after lunch for a meeting,” and have great confidence that the employee will obey them, notwithstanding many unspoken caveats. When the employer says “Please come to my office,” she does not add “unless you are providing CPR for another employee who has had a heart attack, unless you get in a car accident on your lunch break, unless the building is on fire, etc.” Even children understand these unspoken rules. If the teacher tells a child to go to the library, even an obedient child will disobey this directive if the principal meets him on the way and asks him to take an important message back to his teacher, or if the fire alarm rings, or if his father meets him on the way and says there is a family emergency, or if... etc. All the orders we give and all the requests we make are in the context of these unspoken understandings, and everybody pretty much understands this. If a child or friend or employee doesn’t follow through on some agreed upon plan, we usually don’t doubt our “authority” or their integrity, but rather immediately assume there is a good reason. We take

this same approach when dealing with demonic spirits. If they fail to obey a command we give, we immediately assume that there is a reason they are able to do so, and then focus our attention on discerning and resolving whatever is making it possible for them to disobey.

Note: It is important that the facilitator and the person receiving ministry understand this perspective so that demonic disobedience doesn't cause confusion and/or undermine their confidence. When the facilitator and recipient understand this perspective and demonic spirits are able to disobey, instead of being confused or concluding "I guess we don't really have authority over demonic spirits," they will non-anxiously work together to discern and resolve whatever is making it possible for the demonic spirits to disobey.

## **VI. My changing experience in dealing with the demonic (addendum 10/9/2003):**

Over the last several years of emotional healing ministry, I have learned much about dealing with what appears to be demonic interference, and I have grown in my experiential authority in Christ.<sup>16</sup> Along the way, I have documented much of this journey in the essays I have written and published to our website. It is interesting to note, however, that now I rarely encounter *dramatic* demonic manifestations, and I go through most ministry sessions without dealing directly with *any* kind of demonic phenomena. Initially I used the prayers and commands described in this essay several times in every session, but now I might only use them two or three times in a week (or less).<sup>17</sup> At the same time, however, my effectiveness in ministry has continued to increase. As I have pondered the meaning of these changes in my experience, I have identified a number of possible explanations/interpretations:

- A. *The people I minister to now are less "infected" or influenced by the demonic than those I ministered to previously:*** This would be a simple answer, but my perception is that the people I am now working with are much the same as those I ministered to in the past.
- B. *Continued healing has decreased my triggering:*** Getting more of my own healing has continued to decrease the triggering that impairs my discernment, faith, and authority during ministry sessions. It makes sense that increased faith and authority would increase the effectiveness of my opening prayers, in which I still include at least a sentence or two of parameter-setting on the demonic. It also makes sense that increased discernment, faith, and authority would increase my effectiveness in dealing with demonic spirits during the session.
- C. *Increased experiential authority:*** Repeatedly testing these prayers and principles, and repeatedly proving my authority in Christ, has resulted in more *experiential* authority – authority that I know and move in as a result of what I have seen in my own ministry. It makes sense that *experiential* authority is especially important in increasing the power/effectiveness of the opening prayer, and for increasing the power/effectiveness of interventions to deal with demonic interference during the session.
- D. *Consistent, effective "discipline":*** My perception is that demonic spirits learn what they can

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<sup>16</sup> By "experiential authority," we mean that which we know and move in as a result of what we have seen with our own eyes, and done in our own words and actions in ministry, vs. a more theoretical authority which one may believe one has, but which has never been tested in real experience.

<sup>17</sup> 2025 addition: It is now very rare that I deal with demonic interference in the middle of a session, and I might go for months without using these prayers and commands for dealing with interference during the session. However, I do still start and end every session with an opening prayer and closing prayer that addresses possible demonic infection and interference.

“get away with” in any given situation. Over the last several years my discernment, faith, and authority have increased, I have gained an increasingly clear understanding of the rules I have the right to impose, and I have applied this discernment, faith, authority, and understanding in administering increasingly consistent, effective “discipline.” It seems much like maturing from a naive substitute teacher that students take advantage of, to a seasoned, consistent teacher that students don’t mess with. If demonic spirits test the boundaries/rules in any way, they are quickly disciplined and/or forced to reveal information that contributes to their removal. It makes sense that the demonic spirits I deal with have learned to keep their mouths shut and stay out of the way as much as possible.

- E. *Increased discernment regarding demonic spirits vs psychological defenses:*** I have continued to learn about psychological defenses (such as vows and dissociated-internal-parts phenomena), and now recognize even more ways in which I had mistaken interference from the recipient’s own mind for demonic harassment. It is clear to me that some of the decrease in dealing with “demonic phenomena” has come from additional success in recognizing and addressing interference from the recipient’s own mind, instead of mistaking it for demonic phenomena.
- F. *Addressing emotional and spiritual issues that give demonic spirits an anchor/place:*** I have continued to learn about how unresolved emotional and spiritual issues can give demonic spirits a place to stay, and/or an anchor to hold on to. As I have become increasingly effective at identifying and resolving these emotional and spiritual issues, I almost never use deliverance prayers other than the demonic-clean-up part of our closing prayer.<sup>18</sup> I still occasionally see physical manifestations at the point that demonic spirits leave, but usually their exit is so quiet and invisible that the recipient and I can’t tell whether they leave during the session (once we address the issues that have given them a place/anchor), or whether they leave with the closing prayer.
- G. *Addressing free-will choices to allow demonic interference:*** When I first started dealing with demonic interference in emotional healing ministry sessions, I often encountered situations where the interference would stop immediately in response to a simple prayer/command, but I also occasionally encountered situations where the demonic spirits would *not* respond to my prayer/command. As just discussed above, I eventually came to understand various reasons this could happen. Over the last couple years, I have especially been learning more about how *free will choices* of the person receiving ministry are important in *allowing* demonic interference.<sup>19</sup> Now, *in the context of my current experiential authority, consistent “discipline,” and starting every session with our opening prayer*, whenever I encounter demonic spirits that still interfere during the session I always find that the person receiving ministry is making choices that allow the demonic spirits to do what they are doing. The person is usually not giving the demonic spirits explicit, direct permission, but rather making choices that give implicit, indirect permission.

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<sup>18</sup> We both still use the “demonic clean-up” part of the closing prayer at the end of every session.

<sup>19</sup> We want to especially thank Dr. Ed Smith for contributing to this understanding. We have been learning a lot about the place of free will choice as we have been working with vows, other psychological defenses, and the place of spiritual disciplines in emotional healing ministry, but observation of Dr. Smith’s demonstrations has especially helped us to understand how the person receiving ministry often *makes choices* that indirectly *allow* demonic interference (Dr. Ed Smith, live demonstrations at basic apprenticeships 8/2002, 10/2002, 8/2003, and advanced apprenticeship 7/2002).

For example, whenever I find demonic spirits blocking access to traumatic memories, I almost always find that the person, at the deepest level, is still afraid to go to the memories, and is still *choosing* to not go to the memories. This *choice* to not go to the memory seems to provide indirect permission that *allows* demonic spirits to come and “help” by blocking access to the memories. Whenever I encounter demonic spirits disrupting the session, I almost always find that the person, at the deepest level, is afraid of where the session is going, and is choosing to avoid the feared destination. This *choice* to avoid the feared destination seems to provide indirect permission that *allows* demonic spirits to come and “help” by disrupting the session. Note that at the deepest level, *the person’s own will is actually in agreement with the demonic spirits that are blocking access to the memories/disrupting the session.*

I still often observe clues that indicate demonic spirits may be trying to oppose the healing process, but now when I suspect demonic interference during ministry sessions, I focus more on the choices of the person receiving ministry. I now *start* by working with what is happening in the person’s will. As I have done this, and as I have become increasingly effective at identifying and addressing these choices, I have found that I usually don’t need to deal with the demonic interference directly.

**2025 addition:** Since the comments above written in 2003, identifying and resolving free-will choice that allows demonic spirits to remain has become my first and most important strategy whenever I encounter demonic interference that does not resolve with the opening prayer and a single round of enforcement prayer. For at least the last ten years, this has turned out to be the key issue in every single situation in which demonic interference did not fully resolve with the opening prayer and one round of enforcement.

Furthermore, I have discovered that internal parts are usually in the middle of these situations. Occasionally the recipient and I identify a choice in her adult mind that she was not previously aware of, and that is shielding the demonic spirits from our authority in Christ. But in most cases, we find one or more internal parts that are shielding the demonic interference from our authority in Jesus by choosing to let them stay. And there are always dynamics similar to those just described above – the internal part(s) are afraid of where the session will go if they allow it to keep moving forward, so they allow demonic spirits to stay because they help to block the process, or the internal part(s) are afraid that the recipient will not be able to protect herself if she lets go of her anger and bitterness, so they allow demonic spirits to stay because they help strengthen the anger and bitterness, or the internal part(s) are afraid that Jesus will be angry and violent, just like the recipient’s father, so they allow demonic spirits to stay because they help maintain the blocking fears that keep the recipient from welcoming Jesus, or...etc.

For at least the last ten years, the following have been the only ways I have dealt directly with demonic spirits: I always start the session with our condensed sample opening prayer, and then if the recipient and I detect any demonic interference during the session, I apply one simple, quiet round of enforcement prayer. If the interference *does not* resolve with this, I then look for choices that are shielding the demonic spirits (and this often involves working with internal parts).<sup>20</sup> When the underlying reasons for these choices are identified and

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<sup>20</sup> Working with internal parts to identify and resolve ways in which they are shielding demonic spirits can sometimes include brief direct interactions with demonic spirits as part of discerning between internal parts and demonic spirits. See “Distinguishing Between Demonic Spirits and Internal Parts” for additional discussion of this

resolved, the recipient gladly renounces them, and then the demonic interference promptly and easily *does* resolve. Finally, once the shielding choices are no longer in place, the demonic-cleanup component of the closing prayer removes (as opposed to just binds) the demonic spirits involved.<sup>21</sup>

**VII. Additional comments regarding experiential authority:** The above comments regarding experiential authority raise the obvious question: “How can we help others to grow in their experiential authority in Christ?” One answer that has come to me is to continue to share the journey of *how* I got to where I am now. Perhaps it is significant that I did not just jump from very little experience dealing with the demonic to standing confidently in my experiential authority in Christ, and having very few occasions where I deal with demonic spirits directly. I have considered removing certain essays from our website, since they describe phenomena that I now rarely deal with. But since my goal is training and equipping the body of Christ, not simply describing my current ministry, I thought it might be helpful if I continued to share the steps that were important to me along the way. So, at least for the present, I am leaving essays like this one for those who find them helpful as they learn to deal with the demonic.

**VIII. It may take a while for the germs to come back:** One possibility that I wonder about is whether these prayers and commands, and the behavior of demonic spirits, in emotional healing ministry may be analogous to sterile technique and germs in surgery. If an entire surgical department uses good sterile technique over time, the germ concentration will decrease throughout the entire surgical suite. With this scenarios, if the surgical staff decide that the rigorous sterile technique is burdensome, and decide to relax, they may not see dramatic consequences immediately. For example, if there are fewer germs in the operating room to start with, poor sterile technique during one surgery will not cause as much trouble as might be expected. However, if they continue with less-careful sterile technique throughout the department, wound infections and other complications will quietly increase over time. Similarly, if you notice that demonic phenomena during your emotional healing sessions has dramatically decreased, and therefore decide to start skipping the opening prayers and commands dealing with demonic spirits, it may take a while for the demonic “germs” to come back.

Pets also provide a good analogy. The dog our family got when I was a kid had been a well-trained show dog. She came to us extremely well trained, and seemed to require very little from us to maintain this good behavior. However, as we did not enforce certain rules over time, she learned that she could get away with behavior that she never demonstrated when she first came to us. Similarly, it seems that demonic spirits learn that a given minister/facilitator not only knows her authority, but is also careful and rigorous, and that it does not pay to mess with the boundaries. If this facilitator relaxes her consistent “discipline,” it makes sense that demonic spirits might eventually start testing the rules and boundaries. Again, If you notice that demonic phenomena during your emotional healing sessions has dramatically decreased, and therefore decide to start skipping the opening prayers and commands dealing with demonic spirits, it may take a while for the demonic spirits to discover that they can get away with interference that has not previously been tolerated.

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point. (Available as a free download from the “Special Subjects/Advanced Topics” section of the Resources page of [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com))

<sup>21</sup> In some situations, the recipients like to include the demonic cleanup component of the closing prayer immediately after the shielding choices have been removed.

So if you do decide to start skipping the opening prayers and commands, my recommendation is to periodically test my theory by occasionally including them again, along with consistent enforcement during the session if there is any disobedience. And if this experiment reveals that subtle demonic interference has quietly returned over time, then consider the possibility that ongoing spiritual “sterile technique”/consistent discipline might be necessary to prevent demonic interference from creeping back in.<sup>22</sup>

### **IX. Is it even necessary and/or wise to deal with demonic spirits directly?:**

Leanne Payne raises valid concerns about “practicing the presence of demons,” and points out that some Christians interact with demonic spirits in a way that actually increases the problem, and that can be dangerous.<sup>23</sup> Many who are familiar with her material are concerned that dealing directly with demonic oppression and interference during ministry sessions is un-Biblical, unwise, and possibly even unsafe. On the other hand, Dr. Ed Smith teaches that “the war is over,” – that demonic forces have been completely and thoroughly defeated through Jesus’ death and resurrection, and that we don’t need to *fight* demonic spirits in any way.<sup>24</sup> Some understand his teaching to imply that it is not necessary to deal with demonic spirits directly – that we can and should simply ignore them. Charlotte’s and my perception is that both scripture and experience indicate that it is sometimes appropriate (and necessary) to deal directly with demonic spirits in the context of Christian prayer for emotional healing.

Wayne Grudem M.Div., Ph.D., former Chairman of the Department of Biblical and Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, presents a brief and clear discussion of Biblical references supporting the practice of Christians confronting demonic spirits directly in *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*<sup>25</sup>. In addition to his discussion of Biblical references, he also offers simple pastoral insights that are so helpful I am including them here:

We may ask, however, why does God want Christians to speak directly to the demon who is troubling someone rather than just praying and asking God to drive away the demon for them? In a way, this is similar to asking why Christians should share the gospel with another person rather than simply praying and asking God to reveal the gospel with another person directly. Or why should we speak words of encouragement to a Christian who is discouraged rather than just praying and asking God himself to encourage that person directly? Why should we speak a word of rebuke or gentle admonition to a Christian whom we see involved in some kind of sin, rather than just praying and asking God to take care of the sin in that person’s life? The answer to all these questions is that in the world that God has created, he has given us a very *active* role in carrying out his plans, especially his plans for the advancement of the kingdom and the

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<sup>22</sup> We are very interested in observations from any of you that try this experiment (you can send me a note with your observations at drkarl@kclehman.com).

<sup>23</sup> See Payne, Leanne. *Restoring the Christian Soul*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996) p. 208-216. Note that on page 213 Leanne acknowledges that she addresses demonic spirits directly in certain circumstances.

<sup>24</sup> Note: My understanding is that Dr. Smith teaches that we *do* need to deal with demonic spirits in certain situations, but that we *don't* have to *fight* them (Ed. M. Smith, live teaching comments: Advance Theophostic® seminar 2002, Basic Apprenticeship seminar 2002, SRA Apprenticeship seminar 2002, Basic Apprenticeship seminar August 2003, International Association of Theophostic® Ministers conference November 2003).

<sup>25</sup> Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994) p. 427-429.

building up of the church. In all of these cases, our *direct involvement* and *activity* is important in addition to our prayers. And so it seems to be in our dealing with demonic forces as well. Like a wise father who does not settle all of his children's disputes for them, but sometimes sends them back out to the playground to settle a dispute themselves, so our heavenly Father encourages us to enter directly into conflict with demonic forces in the name of Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thereby he enables us to gain the joy of participating in eternally significant ministry and the joy of triumphing over the destructive power of Satan and his demons in people's lives. It is not that God could not deal with demonic attacks every time we prayed and asked him to do so, for he certainly could and he no doubt sometimes does. But the New Testament pattern seems to be that God ordinarily expects Christians themselves to speak directly to the unclean spirits.<sup>26</sup>

**X. Spiritual representation and enforcement as opposed to spiritual warfare:** Note that Charlotte and I agree with Dr. Ed Smith's teaching that "the war is over" with respect to spiritual "warfare" – we agree that demonic forces have already been defeated through Jesus' death and resurrection. However, our understanding is that the Lord asks Christians (His *representatives*) to *enforce* His victory, and our experience is that we encounter opposition as we carry out this enforcement task. For additional discussion of Christians' responsibility as *enforcers* and *representatives* of the Lord's victory, see Dutch Sheets, *Intercessory Prayer*.<sup>27</sup> (Regal Books: Ventura CA) 1996, especially pages 57-58.

As discussed above, I have noticed a steady decrease in the amount of observable demonic phenomena in my ministry sessions, I have been encouraged by the way in which demonic spirits lose power when the person receiving ministry reverses the choices that have given them a place, and I have been encouraged by how much less I now have to deal directly with demonic spirits during sessions. I do still occasionally have direct interactions with demonic spirits during ministry sessions, but most of these interactions are "one way" commands, as opposed to any kind of back-and-forth interaction. As mentioned above in one of the 2025 comments, for at least the last ten years, almost all of my direct interactions with the demonic have been our opening prayer and commands, our enforcement prayer and commands, and our closing prayer and commands. Our Live Ministry Series (LMS) sessions provide many examples of how simple, quiet, and minimal our interactions with the demonic have become. (For most of these sessions, the only "interactions" with the demonic are the "one way" commands included in the opening and closing prayers.)

## **XI. Practical Comments Regarding Each Component of Sample Prayers & Commands:**

This section includes practical comments regarding each component of the sample prayers and commands.

**A. Preparatory/Faith-Foundation Prayers:** The preparatory/faith-foundation prayers can be included at the beginning of any interaction with the enemy. These prayers were especially helpful to me as I was just beginning to exercise my authority in Christ over demonic opposition. I experienced a lot of uncertainty and insecurity, and found that the affirmations of truth and scriptural references bolstered my faith and authority. At this point I usually omit the preparatory/faith-foundation prayers in the interest of time efficiency.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 429

<sup>27</sup> Dutch Sheets, *Intercessory Prayer*. (Regal Books: Ventura CA, 1996), especially pages 57-58.

- B. *Prayer to Expose (October 9, 2003 update):*** Note that I used to include a separate “exposure” component in dealing with demonic spirits during emotional healing ministry sessions, but that I no longer do this. As I have grown in understanding, faith, and authority, and as I have learned to work with the trauma and choices that give demonic spirits a place, I find less and less need to deal with demonic spirits. I now spend very little time dealing with demonic spirits, and find that most of the time I don’t even need to know they are there. I set parameters in the opening prayer, I sometimes command demonic spirits to reveal information during the session (as discussed below), and I include a prayer at the end of each session to throw out anything that has lost its place, but I no longer bother with a separate exposure prayer/command.
- C. *Commands to Bind the Enemy:*** See “General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids” for discussion of my use of the word “binding” in the context of prayers and commands to address demonic interference. Note that this can be omitted during the session if it has already been included in the opening prayer. (As with many other aspects of dealing with demonic interference, once you know your authority, once is enough.)
- D. *Considerations regarding focusing the target (October 9, 2003 update):*** In the previous version of this essay, I stated:

“My perception is that focusing the target increases the impact of our commands. For example, addressing ‘demonic spirits contributing to this sleepiness’ is more focused and would have more impact than addressing ‘all demonic spirits present.’ The caveat is that this only applies when you have the right target. The risk is that you can miss something. Demonic spirits are happy to take any loopholes (for example, if internal parts are causing sleepiness and a demonic spirit is contributing confusion, they are happy to dodge if you address “all demonic spirits causing this sleepiness”). The “shotgun” approach is less likely to miss, but has less impact on what it hits.”

Since then (as my understanding, faith, and authority have increased), I have discovered that the “shotgun” the Lord has given us is almost always powerful enough to get the job done. Now I simply use “all demonic spirits present,” or “all demonic spirits the Lord has just designated” in almost all of my interactions with demonic spirits. My perception is that the usual simplicity and lack of loopholes far outweigh the very rare need to try again with a more focused target.

- E. *Ask Jesus to designate, command demonic spirits to Reveal (October 9, 2003 update):*** In the past, my commands to evil spirits included specifics regarding what they must reveal and how they must reveal this information. Then one of my colleagues pointed out that it would be better to explicitly submit these details to Jesus. Now I ask Jesus to designate *what* He wants revealed, and *how* He wants it to be revealed, and then simply command the demonic spirits to do what He says. **January 2025 addendum:** I have now used this “new” approach for more than twenty years, and it has worked very well.
- F. *Coaching recipient to describe whatever they see, sense, or feel:*** It is very important to instruct the person receiving ministry to *notice* what comes into their awareness while you are praying, and then to help them *describe* whatever thoughts, images, emotions, or physical sensations came into their awareness as you were praying or that come into their awareness after you finish praying.



“Nothing is happening”: I have had many experiences where the person reported “Nothing is happening” after each prayer and/or command. In the past I would have stopped at this point, concluding that there was no demonic interference. I have been amazed at how much quiet spiritual opposition I uncover and how much valuable information I obtain when I coach the person to describe “*whatever* thoughts, images, emotions, or physical sensations that came as I spoke, or are coming now.” As mentioned above, my experience has been that quiet interference with no obvious indication of demonic presence is the most common presentation in most western culture settings. Even after the prayer to expose and command to reveal, the person receiving ministry often misses the evidence of demonic presence, and/or the information being revealed by demonic spirits, because it is not coming as they expect. Many are expecting images, voices, emotions, thoughts, or physical manifestations that *feel* subjectively foreign and/or “demonic.” We all expect that important information should *feel* important. However, the evidence of demonic interference and/or the information being revealed by demonic spirits often comes in subtle ways, and the person receiving ministry will often fail to report it because the thoughts, emotions, images, etc. coming into their awareness don’t *feel* foreign, demonic, or important. Careful implementation of this step after any prayers or commands dealing with demonic interference will help the facilitator and recipient to “see” the significant percentage of demonic interference that usually goes unnoticed, and to obtain the information Jesus is requiring them to reveal.

Clients often explain “I didn’t tell you about \_\_\_\_\_ because it felt like it was just coming from my own mind” (as opposed to feeling foreign and/or “demonic”). We have been amazed at how poor our insight can be – how easily we attribute material from demonic spirits and/or internal parts to our own adult minds. This is especially true if the phenomena have been occurring on a regular basis for many years. One person commented spontaneously, several weeks after a significant session: “I enjoy church a lot more, now that I don’t hear swear words inside my head during the sermon.” You might think that a person would be sure to comment that she hears swearing in her mind every Sunday during church, but she had never mentioned this. When we noted that she had never mentioned this (during months of regular sessions), nor several other significant indicators of demonic harassment, she responded: “I never even realized it was demonic – I just thought they were my own sinful thoughts.”

Another one of my favorite lines is: “Actually, \_\_\_\_\_ has come into my mind each time we have done this prayer for the last several weeks, but I didn’t think it was important.” The person receiving ministry will frequently get thoughts, emotions, images, etc., that don’t *feel* important, but that will lead to something if she describes them and focuses on them. For example, the person receiving ministry might report “I was just wondering if self pity might be in the way,” eventually leading to identifying both a spirit of self pity and the sin of self pity to which it is attached. Or the person might comment “The word ‘anger’ keeps coming into my mind, but I don’t feel any anger and it doesn’t *feel* important – I’m just telling you because it keeps coming back.” When he focuses on this word and we ask the Lord for further guidance, Uncle George “just comes to mind.” As he focuses on Uncle George, he realizes he has bitterness towards him that he needs to release and a spirit of anger attached to the bitterness. Or an “unimportant” memory image may come into the person’s mind: “I am just picturing myself in the car with my family.” And when she focuses on this image, it turns out to be the beginning of a trip that ended in deep rejection – an unresolved traumatic memory anchoring the spirit of rejection that is interfering with the session.

Physical sensations may be the information the demonic spirit is revealing, and these seem to be especially easy to miss. We have seen many situations where the person is convinced that

nothing is happening, but then notices “Well, my neck just started hurting” (or some other physical sensation). Important information then surfaces as she focuses on the physical sensation. We miss the letter in the mail box because we are only listening to the radio or waiting for the phone to ring.

A person’s mind is never blank. “Describe nothing” is the simple encouragement I usually give clients who report “Nothing is happening” or “I’m not getting anything.” The one exception we are aware of is when demonic spirits and/or internal parts are causing an abnormal, artificial blankness/emptiness in order to block the prayer for emotional healing. When this occurs, the person receiving ministry will respond to my prompting with something like “No – my mind really is *blank*. It’s just *empty*. It’s weird.” Every time one of our clients has reported this phenomena, there have been demonic spirits and/or internal parts causing the blankness/emptiness in an attempt to hinder the healing work.

**2025 addition:** Chapters 16 and 17 in the big lion book provide additional discussion regarding the importance of coaching the recipient to describe whatever comes into their awareness, *even if it does not feel important or make sense.*

**G. *Embarrassment/fear hesitation:*** Demonic spirits (and sometimes internal parts) often try to hinder this process by frightening and/or embarrassing the person receiving ministry – they may need coaching/encouragement because they are afraid and/or embarrassed to talk about what is happening. For example, one of our clients was experiencing sudden intense discouragement, with the thought, “This is worthless – I think I should just stop therapy,” and was afraid of offending me. Another was hearing a voice threatening to kill her child if she continued to cooperate with the process, and was understandably afraid to continue. One client had not really believed in the existence of demonic spirits, and eventually admitted “I don’t want to tell you what’s happening – I don’t want to believe this is real.” A number of clients have experienced anger and profanity towards me, and were understandably hesitant to share this. Another common trick is to send especially explicit and shameful sexual thoughts, images, and desires. Demonic spirits and internal parts are amazingly good at presenting these thoughts, images, and desires so that the person feels like they are coming from his/her own adult mind. It is understandably difficult for persons receiving ministry to “confess” this explicit sexual material that they believe to be their own. Just noticing that they seem fearful and/or embarrassed, and describing these common demonic tricks, may help them recognize what is happening and then be willing to talk about what they are experiencing inside. It can also help to ask specifically about embarrassing and/or scary thoughts that they are hesitant to share.

**H. *Caveat regarding looking for clues/information when dealing with possible demonic interference:*** In the general emotional healing ministry process, there is always some clue present. When we ask the Lord to guide each thought, image, memory, emotion, and physical sensation coming into the recipient’s mind, he never leaves us without any guidance. Regarding the overall emotional healing ministry process, I coach and encourage persistently when the person reports “I’m not getting anything.” I know that a person’s mind is never empty and I know that there must be some clue present – the challenge is for myself and the recipient to recognize it for what it is. For example, the total absence of any recognizable cooperation can be a clue that the person has defenses and/or internal parts that are choosing to block the process, or persistent confusion and going in circles can be a clue that I am being triggered and am not thinking clearly.

The situation is more complex when we are dealing with possible demonic interference:

1. There may not be any demonic spirit present, and so nothing happens when we command interfering demonic spirits to reveal what the Lord requires.
2. Demonic spirits may be present, but the Lord may not be requiring them to reveal anything. They may be bound and out of the way, but not revealing any information because the Lord is not requiring them to reveal anything.
3. Demonic spirits may have been present, but chose to “flame out” by directly defying us, refusing to reveal what Jesus required (or some portion of what Jesus required). Our understanding is that the demonic spirits have this option. They can choose to defy our commands, but then they must deal with Jesus personally as defiant spirits. They are then gone and no longer hindering the client or the process, but they do not reveal everything before they leave.
4. Demonic spirits may be present, but are able to defy our commands because some internal part of the person is giving them permission to do so.

I look carefully for anything that might be information revealed in compliance to my command, but I realize that there might not be anything there. The persistence of my encouragement, coaching, and looking for clues is proportional to the strength of my suspicion regarding demonic interference. If there are no specific clues – I am just checking this as one possible reason the process is stuck – then I will move on much more quickly. If there are multiple clues indicating demonic interference, then I am much more persistent in my coaching to “describe nothing” and I am much more thorough in my search for clues.

- I. *Judgment call:*** A judgment call is usually required at this point, depending on what is revealed. If the situation is simple, continue on to the prohibition of further interference, including all additional demonic spirits that have just been revealed. Then finish with enforcement and a final round of “Describe whatever you see, sense, or feel.” For example, one client’s face began twitching immediately after the command to reveal, and he commented “I am feeling intense anger, and the thought is coming into my head that I want to hurt you.” I moved on to commands prohibiting further interference and enforcement, including specifically “spirits of anger, bitterness, hatred, and violence.” His face stopped twitching, he reported that the anger and desire to harm me were also gone, and we moved on with the session. Often the person receiving ministry reports something very simple like “I heard the word \_\_\_\_\_ – I got the sense that there is a spirit of \_\_\_\_\_,” or “I am suddenly feeling discouraged – I think there is a spirit of discouragement.”

Other situations will be more complex. For example, if the demonic spirits reveal bitterness, vows, or something else that is shielding them, probably nothing will move until the shielding problems are dealt with. In this situation, we apply enforcement prayer regarding the command to reveal, deal with the material that was revealed, and then return to prohibition and enforcement regarding the whole encounter, and “Describe whatever you see, sense, or feel.”

- J. *Prohibit Interference:*** (no additional comments at this time)

- K. *Enforcement/Behavior Modification:*** Our perception is that demonic spirits are a lot like

children with respect to obedience.

- They will get away with whatever you let them get away with.
- They will test the boundaries.
- They will obey you to the extent that you consistently enforce the boundaries you set by administering appropriate consequences when they chose to disobey.

I always use a brief “enforcement” prayer (like the sample enforcement prayer below) at the end of every interaction with demonic interference. It seems burdensome regarding time and energy, but my perception is that it has resulted in the same kind of benefits that parents experience when they take the time and energy to consistently enforce any rules they make (a lot more obedience and a lot less nonsense).<sup>28</sup> We have also learned to give demonic spirits “one and only one” chance to comply with any command that we give. For example, in the past we would often go through several rounds of commanding them to reveal, with “We command you to reveal *anything else* that Jesus is requiring you to reveal” at each lap. Now we give them one chance to comply and then move through to enforcement. Our experience is that the demonic spirits infecting the people we minister to quickly learn to get the job done right the first time around.

**L. *Defer to Jesus as the judge regarding compliance:*** There is much that we cannot see/don’t know (like whether they have told us everything Jesus required). There are variables we cannot see (like whether an internal part is shielding the demonic spirits from our commands or whether the demonic spirits have chosen to disobey and face the consequences of direct defiance of the authority of Jesus). Hence, we constantly acknowledge Jesus as the judge and submit the situation to Him whenever judgment regarding compliance is needed.

**M. *Again coaching recipient to describe whatever they see, sense, or feel:*** It is again important to ask more than “Did anything happen?” Help the person receiving ministry describe whatever thoughts, images, emotions, or physical sensations they are experiencing after prohibition and enforcement. If demonic spirits have revealed more useful information, this is the best way to spot it. If demonic interference has been resolved, this is a good way to move on with the session – “whatever” the person sees, senses, or feels will be what the Lord brings next, now that the interference has been removed. If demonic interference has not been resolved, this step will pick up clues that indicate demonic interference remains and that you need to troubleshoot regarding what is shielding the demonic interference.

It is often necessary to coach in the same way as described for “Commands to Reveal,” with respect to both the possibility that they don’t recognize important information and the possibility of hesitation due to fear and/or embarrassment. (If something is shielding the demonic interference from the authority of your commands, the person receiving ministry may again be getting demonic content he/she is hesitant to share.) Again, most of the thoughts and principles discussed above also apply to using this step after the prohibition and enforcement commands.

**N. *Check for change to verify that demonic interference was present (optional):*** Some clients can feel a change immediately after we prohibit further interference (or after enforcement),

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<sup>28</sup> As of July 2001, our perception is that this is already happening. We seem to be getting less and less demonic interference during ministry sessions, and less nonsense when we do deal with demonic interference. Our guess is that this is due to increasing authority as we heal and mature, consistent use of the opening prayer, and also consistent use of the enforcement prayer.

and will make spontaneous comments like “Wow! I can feel something happening now. I can feel my heart opening and healing in a new way.” Others seem to have poor insight regarding the subtle spiritual interference that has been occurring and sometimes just as poor insight regarding the change when the interference is removed. For example, clients have described some negative thought or emotion after the initial prayers and commands: “I’m just really discouraged – I think maybe we should just stop.” After the commands to neutralize demonic interference they just change the subject and start talking about something else. When we stop them and ask specifically, “Where is the discouragement? Thirty seconds ago you were so discouraged you wanted to stop.” They respond, sometimes with no apparent insight, “Oh, I’m just not thinking about that any more.” As described above, careful observation after prohibition and enforcement can help the minister and client “see” the significant percentage of demonic interference that usually goes unnoticed by noting the changes that occur when the demonic interference is removed. Careful implementation of this method was helpful for me as I was just beginning to recognize demonic interference.

**2025 addition:** Note that this step is optional. It can help beginners (both facilitators and recipients) to become more aware of subtle demonic interference, but it adds complexity and takes time and energy. I almost never use it anymore. After the commands prohibiting any further interference and the enforcement prayer, I move ahead with confidence that my commands have been obeyed. As long as the session begins to move forward again, I usually don’t perceive the need to verify that demonic interference was present. (For example, if the session has started to move forward again, I don’t take the time to help the recipient notice that negative emotions or other indicators of demonic interference have resolved.)

**O. *Short Version:*** Some people find that the headings and explanatory comments make these prayers cluttered and cumbersome. I thought it might be convenient to provide a “short version” that would be easier to use once you are familiar with these prayers and no longer need the explanatory comments.

## **XI. Miscellaneous comments**

This section includes a few additional practical points that apply to all components of the sample prayers and commands.

- A. *Observe yourself for triggering and/or harassment:*** We encourage ministers to pay attention to what is going on inside of themselves at any time they are dealing with demonic spirits. If you find yourself getting increasingly fearful, feeling that you have to “watch your back” constantly, and/or feeling that if you don’t pray a prayer just right then something terrible will happen, then you are probably being triggered and/or spiritually attacked yourself. The norm for Christians should be calm, peaceful, non-anxious exerting of the authority Jesus has given us. We can learn to battle wisely, and to take as few “hits” as possible, but we do not need to fear. God is in control.
- B. *Pray with your eyes open:*** Physical phenomena often occur when I use these prayers and commands. I commonly obtain important information by praying with my eyes open so that I can observe any physical phenomena that might occur. See the “Physical Behavior, Phenomena, and Manifestations” section on the Articles/FAQs page of our web site for additional comments about physical phenomena during prayer for emotional healing sessions.
- C. *Don’t pray against internal parts:*** Sometimes people who have internal parts will feel frightened, threatened, or confused by binding and/or deliverance prayer. It can feel like the

internal parts are being attacked and/or prayed against. Furthermore, internal parts are much more common than most people realize. In light of this, I try to discuss this possibility with recipients and clarify that these prayers are addressing only demonic spirits, and NOT any part of the person. See “Distinguishing Between Demonic Spirits and Internal Parts” for additional comments.

**D. Use of Plural wording:** Instead of using awkward singular/plural alternative wording options, such as I/we, me/us, myself/ourselves, etc., I have decided to simply use plural wording. When I use these prayers, I use the plural wording and think of myself as praying in agreement with the recipient and the wider Immanuel Approach community. (You can certainly be confident that Charlotte and I are in agreement with you any time you use these prayers.)

**Preparatory/Faith Foundation Prayers (optional)**

“Lord Jesus, we recognize You as the supreme authority over all of creation. We claim the truth that you have invested us with your authority as your ambassadors. We position ourselves in you, and acknowledge that all we accomplish comes through you and through the power and authority you have invested in us. We ask you to guide us and grant us discernment and wisdom.<sup>29</sup> Help us to understand the spiritual principles and rules that You have established to govern Your creation, and to issue commands that are consistent with Your principles and rules. We ask that you would be the judge regarding whether the demonic spirits present have complied with our commands, and that you would deal with demonic disobedience whenever it occurs. We ask that You would help us discern the reason whenever demonic spirits fail to obey our commands, so that we can find and resolve whatever is allowing the demonic spirits to disobey.”

“All evil spirits present here, we confront you with the truth. Jesus Christ has been Lord over you since your creation. He triumphed over you in defeating Satan in the wilderness, and every day during His ministry on earth. He triumphed over you on the cross and in the grave. His resurrection has sealed your fate, and is ultimate proof of His victory over you, and proof of your inability to oppose Him. Jesus has continued to triumph over you throughout the earth during the last two thousand years of Christian history.

“We stand humbly in our position in Christ. We are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph 2:6). We abide in Christ as branches in the vine (John 15:4-8). We are living temples (1 Cor 6:19, 2 Cor 6:16), with Jesus and the Heavenly Father living in our hearts (John 14:23), as promised in Scripture. We are surrounded by and filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

“We come boldly in the authority of Jesus Christ, speaking the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Eph 6:17), into this situation. We come obeying Jesus’ explicit commands to heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out demons (Matthew 10:8). We come in the authority Jesus has explicitly given us over evil. We come with spiritual weapons in the name of Jesus for exposing and tearing down your strongholds (2 Cor 10:4-5).”

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<sup>29</sup>First several sentences adapted from Ed M. Smith, *Beyond Tolerable Recovery*. (Campbellsville, Kentucky: Family Care Publishing, 1996), pp. 146-7.

## **Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session Sample Prayers and Commands (long version)**

### **Commands to Bind the Enemy (*can be omitted if you have already included this in the opening prayer*):**

“We command all demonic spirits present to be bound in and under the name and authority of the True Lord Jesus, and you must be bound to the representatives that He has appointed.”

### **Ask Jesus for Guidance, Command Demonic Spirits to Reveal:**

“Lord Jesus, we ask that you would designate the information you want revealed, and how you want this information to be revealed.”

*To the person receiving ministry (optional – may be omitted if the person receiving ministry already knows the drill):* “I am going to address any demonic interference in the authority of Jesus. Your job is to pay attention to anything that happens and then tell me whatever thoughts, images, emotions, or physical sensations come as I pray.”

“We command all demonic spirits present to reveal exactly what the True Lord Jesus requires, immediately, clearly, and unambiguously, in whatever way He requires you to reveal this information.”

*To the person receiving ministry:* “Please tell me what ever thoughts, images, emotions, or physical sensations came as I prayed, or are coming now.”

*It sometimes takes a bit of coaching/encouragement at this point. 1. Often the person is having thoughts or feelings that they are very hesitant to share. Ask about embarrassing and/or scary thoughts they are hesitant to share; explain that this is a common demonic trick. 2. The person may have a thought or emotion or physical sensation that they don't report because it doesn't seem important and/or because it feels like “It is just coming from my own mind.” A person's mind is never blank. “Describe nothing” is the simple encouragement I usually give clients who report “Nothing is happening” or “I'm not getting anything.”*

*Judgment call: Either 1. Simple situation: continue on to prohibition of further interference, enforcement, and checking for change, or 2. More complex: apply enforcement prayer regarding command to reveal, deal with material that was revealed, and then return to prohibition, enforcement regarding the whole encounter, and checking for change.*

### **Prohibit Any Further Interference:**

- “We command all demonic spirits present – you must now stand to the side. You may not hinder \_\_\_\_\_'s thoughts, memories, emotions, or interfere with this healing work in any way.”

### **Enforcement/Demonic Behavior Modification:**

“We command all demonic spirits present, you must now submit yourself/selves to the true Lord Jesus Christ and deal with Him personally regarding whether you have adequately complied with His authority through our commands.



“Lord Jesus, we acknowledge you as the righteous judge and we submit \_\_\_\_\_ (this demonic spirit/these demonic spirits) into your hands with respect to whether it/they have adequately complied with Your commands through us. We ask you to deal with them as You see fit.”

(Optional<sup>30</sup>) “We ask that you release and empower the angelic warriors you have prepared to enforce compliance in this situation.”

*To the person being prayed for:* “Please describe what ever thoughts, images, emotions, or physical sensations came as I spoke or are coming now.”

*It is important to ask more than “Did anything happen?” People often seem to have poor insight regarding the subtle spiritual interference that has been occurring and sometimes just as poor insight regarding the change when the interference is removed. It may be necessary to coach/encourage in the same way as described above. The prohibition and “enforcement” commands and prayers will sometimes provide no additional information, sometimes result in more useful information from the demonic spirits, sometimes confirm that demonic interference was indeed present and is now resolved, and sometimes indicate that you need to trouble shoot regarding what is shielding the demonic interference.*

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<sup>30</sup> Charles Kraft describes benefit with specifically asking the Lord for angelic assistance (See *Defeating Dark Angels*, Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1992, pg. 187). Include this only if you feel comfortable doing so.

## **Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session Sample Prayers and Commands (short version)**

*(Omit this first piece if binding commands have already been included at the beginning of the session)* “We command all demonic spirits present to be bound in and under the name and authority of the True Lord Jesus, and you must be bound to the representatives that the True Lord Jesus has appointed”

“Lord Jesus, we ask that You would designate the information You want revealed, and how You want this information to be revealed.”

*Direct the person to pay attention and report (can omit this if they already know the drill)*

“We command all demonic spirits present to reveal exactly what the True Lord Jesus requires, immediately, clearly, and unambiguously, in whatever way He requires you to reveal this information.”

*Encourage the person to describe whatever they see, sense, or feel. Deal with whatever is revealed.*

“We command all demonic spirits present – you must now stand to the side. You may not hinder \_\_\_\_\_’s thoughts, memories, emotions, or interfere with this healing work in any way.”

“We command you now to submit yourself/selves to the true Lord Jesus Christ and deal with Him personally regarding whether you have adequately complied with His authority through our commands.”

“Lord Jesus, we acknowledge you as the righteous judge and we submit \_\_\_\_\_ (this demonic spirit/these demonic spirits) into your hands with respect to whether it/they have adequately complied with Your commands through us. We ask you to deal with them as You see fit.”

(Optional<sup>31</sup>) “We ask that you release and empower the angelic warriors you have prepared to enforce compliance in this situation.”

*Encourage the person to describe whatever they see, sense, or feel.*

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<sup>31</sup> Charles Kraft describes benefit with specifically asking the Lord for angelic assistance (See *Defeating Dark Angels*, Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1992, p.187). Include this only if you feel comfortable doing so.