



IMMANUEL God With Us

2023

What should be our goal in dealing with people who have faced disaster?

- Research shows that our goal should be to find peace, keep peace, create peace around victims and restore peace to their lives, one part at a time.
- We can help people experience the presence of the God of Peace, who will crush the adversary to jelly under their feet soon. (That is *The Source* translation for Romans 16:20.)
- One person who listens and has compassion for a victim will keep that person from going into trauma and PTSD.
- You may be that one person in the time of a major disaster or a personal one. God may arrange a divine appointment for you to minister and bring His love and peace into the situation.

Peace and Suffering

- Hidden traumas emerge more quickly in a place of peace than when we go looking for trauma.
- When we are peaceful, and not alone, we can face our suffering.
- Peace in the biblical sense of “shalom” is a sense that everything is working together. As peculiar as it might sound, even our pain makes sense. Peace does not mean we won’t suffer, only that no suffering can separate us from the love of God.
- The fastest way to peace is to seek peace.

All major religions agree that peace is good for their faithful.

- **Christians speak Peace to you.**
- **Muslims greet each other with Pease to you.**
- **Jews greet with Shalom.**
- **Buddhists seek peace.**
- **Native Americans pass the peace pipe.**
- **Hippies with no religion believe in peace.**

To those who have experienced disaster:

- **Peace is the foundation for rebuilding their lives.**
- **Peace is expected to be contagious.**
- **Those who carry it can bring it to others. It's measurable and transferable.**
- **People are drawn to people carrying peace.**
- **When all else shakes, your peace will draw others to Jesus.**

Disasters create trauma by leaving people alone and without peace.

- **People who find peace will suffer but do not develop post traumatic stress.**
- **PTSD develops when people do not find peace quickly after terrible events.**
- **The way to prevent trauma is to lead people quickly back to peace.**



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Helpers must have peace and pass their peace to others in distress.

- Even when post traumatic stress has begun, the problem is relieved when people are able to return to peace.
- When our peace is strong, we can lead the trauma sufferer to peace.
- Whether we help or are pulled into trauma depends on whether our peace or the disaster feelings are stronger.

- It's common in western society to believe that talking about the details or sharing the feelings with survivors is what heals trauma.
 - Neither is true.
- Talking about details of the disaster only helps when it is obvious that the helper has no idea what has happened. And rehashing the details of disasters will wear out those who are coming to help as well as the victims.

Peace does not mean we do not feel emotions.

- **Numbness and a lack of feeling are often signs of trauma.**
- **Peace comes when we know we are not alone with our feelings and that how we feel makes sense for the situation we face.**
- **Feelings are needed to respond correctly to disasters and to avoid feeling alone.**
- **Sharing emotions builds a bridge to connect with the person in trauma.**

Peace Lost

- **When the strength of a crisis and the feelings it produces cause us to lose a sense of God's presence and love, we lose our peace and are no longer any help to disaster victims.**
- **We have become disaster victims in our own souls as well.**
- **However, as we recover, we develop the ability to help others experience that God is with them in their pain.**
- **We learn to pass the peace.**

Crisis is not the time to develop peace!

- **The ideal is to walk in that place of shalom on a moment to moment basis.**
- **It is important to hear the voice of God and know He is with us.**
- **Our goal is to establish an Immanuel – God with Us – Lifestyle so people can't escape being touched by God's love, His peace and His joy.**
- **That is the Kingdom!**

How do we get there?

- How do we move from leaning on our own understanding to listening to the voice of our Maker?
- Let's start with Immanuel (God with us) Journaling.

What is Immanuel Journaling?

Simple method for improving our awareness of God's presence in our thoughts and lives.

Three parts to consider:

- Interactive gratitude
- Writing our impressions – thought rhyming with God
- Reading our journal aloud

Why would we want to improve our awareness of God's active presence in our lives?

- **Guidance for every day issues**
- **A way to start the day**
- **Friendship**
- **Healing emotional wounds**
- **Enhancing character**
- **Building community – conflict resolution**

Immanuel (God with us)

- Immanuel Journaling is a simple way to get us intimate with God and changes life from the inside out.
- Interacting with God is something we all talk about as believers – but is it something most people can navigate?
- Even when Jesus came as Immanuel (God with us) to earth, those closest had difficulty seeing God in Him.
- Think of Peter who went back to fishing and the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus. Jesus diagnosed them with sluggish vision (slow of heart). They were focused on pain in their hearts.

- **We're no different than those disciples. We are slow of heart and have impaired vision of Jesus walking with us. Thank God for the Holy Spirit to empower us to experience Immanuel, the God who walks with us.**
- **And yet, many – maybe most – believers can not point to many conscious interactions with Him.**

3 Reasons we may not be aware of His Presence

Number 1

- Our minds might not be in a relational state, one that is receptive to interaction with God or people.
- A relational state occurs because neural pathways in our brains have relational circuits (RC's) that may be open, alert or impaired.
- When we are in deep pain, loss, trauma, our RC's are off and we fail to recognize who is talking to us ... or walking with us.

3 Reasons we may not be aware of His Presence

Number 2

- Sometimes our thoughts and feelings simply do not line up with God's.
- The cingulate cortex in our brain makes it possible to establish a mutual-mind state in our brain.
- When this happens, we learn to think and feel the way people we love think and feel. We finish other's sentences.
- We resonate with what they say. We weep and rejoice with them without even thinking about it.

- For we are His workmanship [His own master work, a work of art], created in Christ Jesus [reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, ready to be used] for good works, which God prepared [for us] beforehand [taking paths which He set], so that we would walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us]. *Ephesians 2:10 Amplified*
- The translation of the Greek word *poiema* as handiwork or workmanship misses the mark.
- *Poiema* literally means God's poetry.
- Poetry in scripture does not rhyme SOUNDS.
- It follows Hebrew pattern and rhymes THOUGHTS.

- That means as God's poetry, our thoughts can – and should rhyme with our Father's.
- **AMAZING?**
- How does that work? Through intimacy with God or another person, we begin to finish their sentences, know what others are feeling and pondering.
- That is a mutual mind-set. Don't really know where ours ends and theirs begin.

A mutual mind state with God results in:

- **Thinking and acting like God**
- **Emulation of His character**
- **Emulation of His heart**
- **We show the world the poet behind the poetry**
- **Note that good works don't save us**
- **Good works flow from thinking like our Creator**
- **We rhyme God's actions and not just His thoughts**

3 Reasons we may not be aware of His Presence

Number 3

- We don't stop to check the characteristics of our thoughts to see if they are poetry that rhyme with God's thoughts.
- Thoughts that rhyme with God's produce shalom.
- That's a state of harmony where everything works together, makes sense and is good.
- Shalom is the "peace of Christ."

- **Colossians 3:15 tells us we should let shalom act like a referee in our lives who stops the action every time shalom is missing.**
- ***Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Colossians 3:15***
- **Greek word *bratbeuo* means “sit as an umpire.”**
- **Peace should be refereeing every aspect of our lives.**
- **When we are synchronized with how God thinks, we will have shalom and make mind-poetry with God.**

- We lack the peace of Christ, shalom that referees our lives, because we have not learned to rhyme our thoughts with God's thoughts.
- Colossians 3: 9-17 gives us a clear picture of what lives should reflect in a mutual mind set with God.
- With Immanuel's love guiding our lives, the peace of God rules in our hearts.

Colossians 3:9-11

- ▶ **9-11 Don't lie to one another. You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it. All the old fashions are now obsolete. Words like Jewish and non-Jewish, religious and irreligious, insider and outsider, uncivilized and uncouth, slave and free, mean nothing. From now on everyone is defined by Christ, everyone is included in Christ.**

Colossians 3:12-14

- ▶ **12-14** So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.

Colossians 3:15-17

- ▶ **15-17** Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.

A Few Words About iSight (Immanuel Sight)

- **iSight is having the recognition that God is present, is truly good and perseveres in doing good for us.**
- **He is always glad to be with us! He will never leave us or forsake us. Or reject us. He is there to meet us exactly where we are. He loves us in our weakness.**
- **He is ABBA Father. His desire is to bless us in ways we can't even imagine.**
- **And He knows the end from the beginning.**

- If we had people who loved and nurtured us growing up, we probably have good connective skills. It is easy to connect with others and God.
- If we experienced abuse and rejection, betrayal and violence, it's not easy to trust people and perhaps not God. Power of words spoken worthless as a nickname.
- Some of us might find our iSight weak or poor. It may be the reason so many Christians live a life of survival instead of thriving.
- True iSight brings the abundant thriving life.

iSight Adjustment

- **Don't be discouraged if you feel your iSight might need some new lenses. God will meet us exactly where we are.**
- **Jesus spent 3 years with His disciples. They lived a miraculous lifestyle. They saw his unconditional love for them. They saw Him risen!**
- **Yet it wasn't until Pentecost when the Spirit of Comfort came that they moved into a new position.**
- **God will open our eyes to recognize that He is good. He's here for us if we will just humbly open our lives to Him and believe what He says.**

JOY

- **The good news is that we develop, strengthen and even correct our iSight through interaction with God.**
- **Science is proving that the human brain is designed to be in loving, reciprocal relationships.**
- **Humans thrive when connected to people we love and who love us.**
- **The definition of JOY is being with someone who is glad to be with us.**
- **Those interactions fill our JOY buckets!**

Let's Do an Exercise

- Start with a ball of yarn and a partner. Hold on to one end of yarn and throw the ball to your partner.
- He'll throw it back. You'll hold it and toss the yarn again. And you repeat again and again.
- What is happening to the yarn you are holding?
- The connection is getting thicker and stronger!
- The yarn loops provide a metaphor for how relationships grow stronger and deeper!

Our life with Christ can be viewed in a similar way

- **The cross of Christ is a timeless reminder that through the shedding of His precious Blood, we are forever connected to God.**
- **Being born again may be a one time event, but we must strengthen that relationship through interaction with God and His people.**
- **Just as children wither physically, emotionally and spiritually if they are left without human contact, so we must interact and be those who abide in the vine!**

He wants to talk to you!

- ▶ **Think of the ball of yarn as a metaphor of our relationship with God. He wants His sheep to hear His voice. He wants us to hear Him sing over us. He waits for us to throw the ball back to him. And even when we are frail and can't throw the yarn, His Spirit helps us.**
- ▶ **He never gives up on us and still, moment by moment, works on our behalf until the end. Immanuel. God with us.**

There are 3 IMMANUEL Processes

- 1. Written Immanuel**
- 2. Oral Immanuel**
- 3. Group Immanuel**

All start with gratitude. If we're working with Christians, we look for that time when we knew God was with us. That's a 5 bar moment with Him! All RC's on!

All have been used with people from different cultures. Some Islamic refugees in Germany came to Jesus because He showed Himself to them in the exercise.

- **All are easily transmittable. The process can be taught in as little as 15 minutes. When teaching to a group of wives who had survived their husbands being killed in Colombia, moms went home and taught their children. In 2 days, the process had been duplicated 5 times.**
- **Peace and gratitude do not simply help people heal, but also improve their capacity to survive and adapt. Teaching survivors to receive and pass peace speeds recovery.**

Group Immanuel

- ▶ **Group Immanuel has proved very successful with those coming out of high trauma such as floods, tornados, earthquakes. Surprising number of groups in high trauma areas report good results for the entire group. It seems as though the greater the need, the higher the success rates have been.**
- ▶ **The process is safe for all ages and situations.**
- ▶ **When the exercise is finished, participants read answers out loud to set them on the left side of our brain where our files cabinets are.**

Now for Immanuel

We're looking for 3 things:

- **A shift in our perspective which is closer to God's reality.**
- **What we have written lines up with principles of God.**
- **Bits of God's truth are confirmed when we read our story to others who know Him.**

After learning today:

- Practice all three methods with your friends and family. Get comfortable with them.
- Tell Immanuel stories to each other. Leaders who help their people experience peace must also teach them to tell the story of how they experienced peace rather than the story of how they experienced disaster. Our stories of peace must help others to look at the Master in their storms. Stories of God's presence pass the peace.
- Think about bringing Immanuel to your small groups, to children and teens.
- Think about starting your day with Immanuel Journaling – or Immanuel Texting.

In the Field:

- **If you find yourself without peace when you are in a disaster field, stop and ask God what He wants you to know about what has upset you. Remember that nothing can take away suffering but suffering should not be allowed to steal our peace.**
- **Keep a focus on helping others experience God's peace rather than asking them to accept our beliefs. Starting with peace often opens doors to belief. Starting with belief does not open many doors to peace.**

- **Communities are maintained by people with maturity. Watch for mature people in the community where you're working as they will multiply your effectiveness. Mature people can pass the peace in the morning and be helping others by evening.**
- **When in the field, be sure you and your team are in a place of peace when you finish the day. Use Immanuel to get to that place.**

Credits

Presentation:

Barb Bucklin with Luke 4:18 Ministries, Austin, Texas

Reference Books:

Joyful Journey by Dr. Jim Wilder

Passing the Peace by Dr. Jim Wilder