

The Immanuel Approach (to Emotional Healing and to Life)

Chapter 34: Prunes, Plums, and Immanuel

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DRAFT

This story from a friend of ours in Iowa provides a good example of the kind of experiences people are reporting as they incorporate the Immanuel approach into their daily lives – as they get into the *habit* of inviting Jesus to be with them, asking for help in perceiving his presence, and then deliberately waiting and watching for a sense of his tangible presence. We believe that Immanuel approach sessions with a facilitator provide special benefits,¹ and we strongly encourage people to have these on a regular basis; but we also encourage people to embrace the kind of “every day, wherever you are” connection with Jesus described in this story as another part of what we call the Immanuel *lifestyle*.

“One afternoon shortly after I had been introduced to Immanuel Prayer, I was resting against the counter after cleaning up the kitchen. It was summertime and the sun was coming through the window near where I was standing. “Where are you, Jesus? What are you doing?” I wondered. After a few moments, I sensed Jesus and saw him leaning up against the counter in a white robe. He was smiling and playfully tossing a plum into the air, it landing over and over again in his right hand. I asked him, “Where did you get that?” and then I looked on the counter and noticed a bag of prunes that my kids and I had been snacking on earlier! I was tickled, and rested in the interaction for awhile. I was reassured that Jesus does make all things new, and that he in fact does make shriveled, dried things come to life. This was especially impactful, because at the time I was experiencing a fairly hopeless situation. The time with Jesus gave me peace and hope, and I felt especially blessed that he came to me in such a surprising way.”²

¹ For example, as described in chapters eleven and twelve, when a person is having difficulty establishing or maintaining an adequate interactive connection, it is always helpful (and sometimes necessary) to have a facilitator who can help the recipient with troubleshooting. As described in chapter fourteen, when a person gets stuck in a difficult place, it is always helpful (and sometimes necessary) to have a facilitator who can implement the primary safety net by coaching the recipient to return to her original positive memory, appreciation, and connection with Jesus. As discussed at length in chapters seventeen and eighteen, God has designed our brains to work best in community, and interacting with a facilitator will always release profound benefits through taking advantage of this relational brain design. As described in chapters thirty-one through thirty-three, it is important to discern between genuine interactive connections and interactive connections that are counterfeit or contaminated, and a facilitator can be very helpful with this discernment. And working with a facilitator can augment the recipient’s faith and capacity.

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