



Opening Prayers and Commands: Prayer for the Facilitator, Dealing with the Demonic, and General Introductory Prayer

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I. Introduction: Over the past 25 years of facilitating emotional healing sessions, I have learned to be very conscientious about starting every session with prayer. I have also developed a number of specific components that I consistently include in this opening prayer, as discussed below. The reasons I perceive these components to be important are also included in the below discussions. I realize that subtleties of culture may vary from one therapy/ministry setting to the next, and that the specific language of my sample prayers may therefore feel awkward for some facilitators and recipients. If this is your experience, feel free to adjust the language so that it is most suitable for your specific context; however, I encourage you to try to include the same key components as much as possible.

I also realize that many emotional healing facilitators are much more relaxed/informal about the prayer they include at the beginning of each session, and I know that many of these people still get good results. If you are one of these people, I would at least encourage you to deliberately experiment with the different components described below, and then observe carefully with respect to possible benefits.

II. Immanuel approach components: For those who are able to use the Immanuel approach to emotional healing (those who are able to establish a living, interactive connection with Jesus that is strong enough to provide the foundation for this approach), we start the opening prayer with specific requests pertaining to the initial steps of the Immanuel approach process. As described in much more detail in parts I and V of “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us,” these initial steps are:

- 1.) Recall past experiences of positive connection with the Lord;
- 2.) Deliberately appreciate specific aspects of/details from these past positive experiences; and
- 3.) Refresh perception of the Lord’s presence and connection with Him *in the present*.

In the past I have used different variations of the opening prayer, depending on where the recipient was in her journey with respect to using the Immanuel approach and depending on her preferences regarding certain details. Now, however, I use just one version of the opening prayer,¹ which includes all of the Immanuel approach components right at the beginning, and I just vary the coaching and explanations I give before and after the prayer. For example:

- If I am working with a person who is just getting started and needs help in working through each of the initial steps slowly and separately, I still use the usual, standard condensed version of the opening prayer (see below), even though it includes requests regarding all three of the initial

¹ I am not referring to full version vs condensed version in this sentence, but rather to variations on the “standard” full version of the prayer, and variations on the “standard” condensed version of the prayer.

Immanuel approach steps right at the beginning. I explain to the recipient that she doesn't need to do anything during the opening prayer except watch for positive memories that the Lord brings forward, and I reassure her that I will coach her through each of the initial Immanuel steps after we finish the prayer. Immediately following the opening prayer, I ask the person to describe whatever positive memory came forward, and then give her a little more coaching help as she does the deliberate appreciation piece. When she gets to the point where she is *feeling* gratitude, I give a quick refresher explanation regarding perceiving the Lord's presence and establishing an interactive connection, offer a brief prayer requesting the Lord's help with this component, and then coach her to describe whatever comes into her awareness.

- As people become more practiced with the Immanuel approach, they can often learn to go through more of the initial steps during the opening prayer. Therefore, when a person has had a number of successful sessions I encourage her to experiment with doing more during the opening prayer. I use the same, standard condensed version of the opening prayer, but now I invite her to try watching for the positive memory, reconnecting with it when it comes forward, and then moving into deliberate appreciation, all while I'm going through the opening prayer. As soon as I'm done with the opening prayer I ask the person to let me know where she's at, and then I coach her in moving forward from that point.
- As people continue to gain experience with the Immanuel approach, they often learn to go through even more of the initial steps during the opening prayer. Therefore, when a person has had a number of sessions in which she has gotten to the point of connecting with the positive memory and feeling appreciation during the opening prayer, I encourage her to experiment with doing more.² I still use the same, standard condensed version of the opening prayer, but now I invite her to try going all the way through to reestablishing an interactive connection. As soon as I'm done with the opening prayer I ask the person to let me know where she's at, and then we move forward from there. If she's still working with one of the initial steps, I join her there and coach her forward. If she has already established a living, interactive connection with Jesus, we pause briefly for her to describe her positive memory and the details of her interactive connection, and then flow into the rest of the session.
- Some people, even though they are very familiar with the Immanuel approach, like to participate in/actively agree with the opening prayer at the beginning of each session, and then move to positive memory recall, deliberate appreciation, perceiving the Lord's presence, and reestablishing an interactive connection once the opening prayer is finished.³ It's pretty straightforward to cooperate with this preference. We go through the same, standard condensed opening prayer together, and then I coach the person through the initial steps (which usually flow very smoothly and quickly, requiring no explanations and minimal coaching direction).

II. Prayer for the facilitator: We began to address the facilitator's unresolved issues in our

² Actually, the most common scenario is that all of this happens spontaneously. The person just starts spontaneously going through more and more of the initial steps during the opening prayer. As I notice this, I draw their attention to it and encourage them to continue flowing with the development. Occasionally there will be blockages that hinder the initial steps, and troubleshooting is required at the beginning of the session; but once I notice this pattern of the person going through more initial steps during the opening prayer, it often becomes the usual pattern for subsequent sessions.

³ For whatever reason, this is the way I prefer starting sessions when I'm the recipient, as long as we're not pressed for time.

opening prayer after noticing certain patterns in our own healing work. For several months Charlotte and I had been experiencing a lot of frustration with sessions in which she was facilitating emotional healing ministry for me, and we were both noticing that I consistently received much more benefit in my sessions with Dan (a friend and colleague). Charlotte and I then had a session that was much more fruitful than any of our other recent attempts. Following this session we were trying to make sense out of all this, and especially trying to identify anything that might have contributed to the success of the most recent session. We realized that our other recent sessions had frequently included getting tangled in each other's triggers, and we realized that Dan and I did *not* seem to get tangled in this way. Charlotte also realized that in the prayer at the beginning of our successful session, she had explicitly acknowledged her own brokenness and had asked to be able to set aside her own issues. She had asked the Lord to help her fulfill her role as the facilitator even if I said something that triggered her wounds and lies.

After these experiences we started experimenting with these two specific requests in our opening prayers. Our efficacy as facilitators seemed consistently better when we did this. The more we pondered these pieces the more they all fit together. We now include prayer to address the unresolved issues of the facilitator at the beginning of every emotional healing ministry session.

Our perception is that this prayer is beneficial for a couple of reasons in addition to the Lord answering the explicit requests: 1. It helps put the facilitator in a good place of humility, which leaves more room for the power and presence of God. 2. It reassures the client that the therapist recognizes his or her own fallibility⁴ – that the client won't automatically be blamed for every difficulty in the emotional healing work. This second point will be especially important for people (like me) that have wounds around being blamed and lies about "It's always my fault."

The following are several helpful specifics we have identified as we have experimented with this component of the opening prayer:

Include this prayer even if you're not being stirred up at the beginning of the session: We have found that it is helpful to acknowledge that we have wounds, lies, and sins that can hinder our ability to facilitate, even if we are not aware of any specific unresolved issues being stirred up at the beginning of the session.

Acknowledge it if your own issues are being stirred up: In some sessions I will notice that specific issues are already being stirred up, even at the beginning of the session. This is especially true for clients that have been "stuck." Some issue in my own life is almost always being stirred up if I find myself not looking forward to a particular session. As discussed in "Unresolved Issues in the Therapist: One of the Most Important Hindrances to Emotional Healing Ministry," it is important to acknowledge to the person receiving ministry that your own issues are getting stirred up. You can make some simple comment, such as "I can feel that some of my own issues are getting stirred up as we prepare to start this session, so I am going to pause during the opening prayer to acknowledge them silently to the Lord.

Regarding specifics: In an earlier version of this essay, we encouraged the facilitator to include the specifics about his/her own triggering, out loud, in the opening prayer. As we have

⁴ If you cannot honestly say this you are either perfect or in denial. All joking aside, if you have difficulty saying this prayer you might want to find someone who can help you look for denial and/or blind spots in your emotional and spiritual life.

continued to think and learn regarding this, we have realized that it is a much more complicated issue than we had initially perceived. At this time we recommend acknowledging specifics *silently*, to the Lord, unless you have a clear, strong sense of discernment that it will be safe and helpful to do otherwise.

Acknowledge your triggering and ask the Lord for help even if you can't focus the specifics: Often I can feel that some unresolved issue is being stirred up at the beginning of a session, but I can't yet focus the problem more clearly. I have found that it is still helpful to acknowledge that some issue is being stirred up in me and to ask the Lord for help. For example, "Lord, I can feel that I am being triggered about something. I can feel my anxious, scared child place getting stirred up, but I don't know what it's about," and then continuing with the opening prayer: "I ask you to give me special grace and to carry this for me so that I can.... etc."

III. Dealing with the Demonic

Commands for the protection of the facilitator: We began including specific commands for the protection of the facilitator at the beginning of each session after an experience in a training group we were supervising. As I observed the session I remember noting that the facilitator made poor choices about which trouble shooting tools to try, and that he also seemed to have unusually poor timing about when to try these interventions. It seemed that the trouble shooting interventions were repeatedly breaking the momentum just as the person receiving ministry was about to connect with something important.

During the debriefing time after the session, the person receiving ministry described exactly that: "Every time I felt like I was just about there – something important was about to happen – Mike would ask me to do something different or would ask me to try one of the prayers. It felt like that kept getting in the way, blocking the healing." One of the people present had the gift of discernment of spirits, and commented "During the prayer time, the demons weren't attacking the person receiving ministry, they were all around Mike – attacking him." I immediately realized that in this particular situation, the spiritual opposition decided they could disrupt the emotional healing work more effectively by interfering with the facilitator than by interfering with the person receiving ministry.⁵ As Charlotte and I were discussing this we realized that harassing and confusing the facilitator is probably standard operating procedure for the enemy. We started experimenting with commands to set parameters specifically for the protection of the facilitator, and noticed that our efficacy as facilitators seemed consistently better when we did this.

Bind demonic spirits together and deal with them in groups: Many of those who deal with demonic interference as a part of their ministry have discovered that emotionally wounded people are usually infected by more than one demonic spirit.⁶ We agree with those who believe it is most effective to bind demonic spirits together, and then deal with them in groups.

Ask Jesus to appoint representatives, and then deal only with these representatives: Most of these same authors agree that demonic spirits are arranged in a hierarchical structure, much like human

⁵ Demonic spirits appear to understand systems theory.

⁶ See, for example, Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1995), p. 192; Michael Scanlan and Randall Cirner, *Deliverance From Evil Spirits* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980), p. 78; Edward M. Smith, *Beyond Tolerable Recovery* (Campbellsville, KY: Alathia Publishing, 2000), p.312.

organizations.⁷ Just as when dealing with human organizations, you get the most done if you deal with the person/demon “in charge.” The idea of asking Jesus to appoint demonic representatives came from Dr. Smith: “I used to...demand to speak to the demon of highest rank... This does not always work because they will switch positions... A better way is simply to ask the Lord Jesus to appoint a spokesperson/demon for the group.”⁸

Cutting off communication and/or assistance: The importance of cutting off demonic spirits from communicating with and/or assisting each other is widely recognized among ministers experienced in dealing with demonic interference.⁹ The reason for this quickly becomes clear when we realize that basic “real world” battle strategies apply whenever one is dealing with intelligent, organized opposition. One of the first tactical strategies in warfare is to knock out the enemy’s communication (people may recall that communication centers were one of the first targets of the “smart bombs” in the Persian Gulf war). You can cripple a large army simply by cutting the communication lines, so that it is not able to function as an organized and coordinated whole. Conversely, even a small strike force can cause a lot of damage if they have excellent communication, and can therefore coordinate their actions to maximize strategic impact. Another basic battle strategy is to cut the enemy’s supply lines so that they cannot receive supplies or reinforcements (the “smart bombs” also targeted bridges, railroads, and airports in order to eliminate options for transporting supplies and troops).

Spiritual representation and enforcement as opposed to spiritual warfare: We 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. It seems wise to be strategic as we deal with this intelligent, organized opposition.¹⁰

Returning stolen goods, stripping evil spiritual forces away from internal parts: I don’t have any particularly clever or original explanations for these components of our opening prayer. We originally got them from Dr. Smith’s teaching material,¹¹ and they seem to make basic sense. The Bible is pretty clear about the devil being a thief, and I’m guessing that all other evil spiritual forces follow his lead. It seems to make sense that we exercise our authority in Christ to command evil spiritual forces to return whatever they have stolen. With respect to stripping evil spiritual

⁷ See, for example, Neil Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1993), p. 88; Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1995), p. 218; Edward M. Smith, *Beyond Tolerable Recovery* (Campbellsville, KY: Alathia Publishing, 2000), p.312.

⁸ Edward M. Smith, *Beyond Tolerable Recovery* (Campbellsville, KY: Alathia Publishing, 2000), p. 312.

⁹ See Neil Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1993), p. 88; Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1995), p. 168.

¹⁰ For additional discussion of Christians’ responsibility as *enforcers* and *representatives* of the Lord’s victory, see Sheets, Dutch. *Intercessory Prayer*. (Regal Books: Ventura CA) 1996, especially pages 57-58.

¹¹ See, for example, Edward M. Smith, *Beyond Tolerable Recovery, Basic Video Seminar Facilitator Guide*. (Campbellsville, KY: Theophostic® Ministries, 1997), p. 45, 48, and *Beyond Tolerable Recovery* (Campbellsville, KY: Alathia Publishing, 2000), p. 336-338.

forces away from internal parts, my personal observations are that internal parts are particularly vulnerable to harassment from evil spiritual forces, and that including this simple piece to the opening prayer (especially when working with more complicated, severe trauma) significantly reduces the enemy's ability to hinder the session.

Rules/Parameters for demonic manifestation: The simple principle here is that the Lord has given us authority, as His representatives, to impose limits on demonic manifestation. We first learned this principle from others experienced in emotional healing ministry,¹² but we have now also proven this principle in our own experience. As we have consistently included this component in our opening prayers, and as we have grown in our faith and authority to enforce these parameters, demonic manifestations during our sessions have become less and less dramatic. In our current experience, we never see dramatic or disruptive manifestations in our sessions unless the person receiving ministry is choosing to allow them.¹³

Several practical thoughts regarding parameters for demonic manifestation:

Revealing information as a form of manifestation: In the sample prayer below, we have included our commands for demonic spirits to reveal information under “parameters for demonic manifestation” because every way in which demonic spirits can reveal information is also a form of manifestation. This is a small point of logical organization, but it is also practical, in that this is another part of the opening prayer that can eventually be condensed into “You will manifest only and exactly as the true Lord Jesus allows and requires.”

Let Jesus specify the details regarding communication: Our sample prayer used to include wording that required any material be communicated into the recipient's “thoughts and mental vision.” One of our colleagues pointed out that it would be better to explicitly submit the pathway of communication to the Lord's discretion, instead of unnecessarily limiting this in our command by specifying only the person's *thoughts and mental vision*. The Lord's best plan might be for the demonic spirits to reveal information by stirring up a certain emotion, or by causing a certain physical sensation or movement. Our current sample prayer explicitly submits the pathway of communication to the Lord's discretion.

Prohibit demonic spirits from causing dissociative switching: In *Deep Wounds, Deep Healing*, Charles Kraft notes that demonic spirits will cause switching between different internal parts in order to disrupt the ministry session.¹⁴ I had also observed that dissociative switching often interfered with the emotional healing work, with parts getting stirred up, but “switching out” before

¹² See, for example, Charles H. Kraft, *Deep Wounds, Deep Healing*, (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1993), p. 269-70; Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1995), p. 174; Edward M. Smith, *Beyond Tolerable Recovery, Basic Video Seminar Facilitator Guide*. (Campbellsville, KY: Theophostic® Ministries, 1997), p.45,48.

¹³ Note: The person may not be aware of this choice in his adult, conscious mind, but when a demonic spirit manifests outside our parameters, we almost always (always?) find that the person receiving ministry, at the deepest level, is choosing to allow the disruption as part of avoiding some painful and/or scary aspect of the healing work. See “Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session, Prayers and Commands to Neutralize Demonic Interference” on the Ministry Aids page of our web site for additional discussion of the interaction between free will choice and demonic interference.

¹⁴ Charles H. Kraft, *Deep Wounds, Deep Healing*, (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1993), p. 250, 251.

they could receive healing. I had assumed that the disruptive switching was solely a part of the dissociative defenses, and had been dealing only with the internal parts involved as I tried to address the problem. After reading Dr. Kraft's comments, I began including a simple command prohibiting demonic spirits from causing switching (except as Jesus requires to provide information He wants us to have). My perception is that disruptive switching has decreased significantly with the addition of this simple command.

Enforcement: Our perception is that demonic spirits are a lot like children with respect to obedience:

- 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.
- They will get away with whatever you let them get away with.

I (Karl) currently include a brief "enforcement" section in the opening prayer, and then during the session I use a brief "enforcement" prayer and/or command after any interaction with the demonic, and at any point that I suspect incomplete compliance with any commands that have been given.¹⁵ This may seem excessive, but I have had situations where I carefully went through all the other steps of dealing with demonic interference with no response/results. I thought "the problem must not be demonic," but before turning to something else I felt prompted to finish with a last step of enforcement. As I finished this, a demonic spirit manifested visibly and the person reported hearing an internal voice that said, "Okay, okay – I'll give you what you want." At other times the demonic spirit will leave at this point (with or without manifestation), instead of providing information that will be helpful. An analogy that came to me was that the initial commands (#1-#3 from the "Dealing with the Demonic" section of the sample prayer, below), are like being stopped by a police officer who reads you the law, tells you that you were going 85 mph in a 65 mph zone, but then just stands there waiting for you to do something, and if you drive away he just watches you go. Including the enforcement prayer and commands (#5 & #6 from the "Dealing with the Demonic" section of the sample prayer, below), is like the police officer putting out his hand and saying, "Give me your driver's license, I am giving you a ticket."

My (Karl's) perception is that I am seeing 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 (I am seeing a lot less demonic interference during ministry sessions, and a lot less nonsense when I do deal with demonic interference).¹⁶

One chance: We have learned to give demonic spirits "one and only one" chance to comply with any command that we give. Our perception is that the demonic spirits infecting the people we minister to quickly learn to get the job done right the first time around.

¹⁵ See "Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session, Prayers and Commands to Neutralize Demonic Interference" on the Ministry Aids page of our web site for additional discussion of "enforcement" prayers and commands.

¹⁶ My guess is that this is due to increasing authority as I heal and mature, consistent use of the opening prayer, and also consistent use of the enforcement prayer. See section VII in "Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session, Prayers and Commands to Neutralize Demonic Interference" on the Ministry Aids page of our web site for additional observations and discussion regarding our changing experience in dealing with demonic phenomena.

Ask Jesus to be the Judge: 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.

Pray with authority, but be aware of the conditions under which the demonic spirits can disobey: The 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. 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 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. See "Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session, Prayers and Commands to Neutralize Demonic Interference" on the Ministry Aids page of www.kclehman.com for additional comments.

*Material **not** included in the opening commands regarding parameters for the demonic:* We continue to learn, experiment, and observe regarding our opening prayer for emotional healing ministry sessions. Our current perception is that it is useful to lay down general rules regarding demonic interference and manifestations, but that it is not the best use of time and energy in the opening prayer to address specific targets. Our experience is that soul ties, bitterness, vows, judgments, unconfessed sins, psychological defenses, etc. do give demonic spirits a place and authority in a person's life, but that these specific targets need to be addressed when the person is connected to the specific memories/lies/internal parts where the soul ties, bitterness, etc. are anchored/carried. Specific targets such as these respond minimally to including them in the opening prayer in a "shotgun" approach (shooting into the dark, hoping to hit something), but resolve quickly and easily when addressed at the place they are anchored. At present, I address these "specific targets" by asking the Lord to reveal anything we need to deal with in order to expose and remove demonic interference, anything we need to address in order to destroy the enemy's place and authority in the life of the person receiving emotional healing.

Our experience with the demonic has been changing (Update 11/1/2003): Our experience of dealing with the demonic has been changing steadily over the last several years (we encounter demonic interference less often, and it is less dramatic and resolves more quickly when we do encounter it). We encourage those using the material in this essay to also review the observations and comments discussed in "Our changing experience in dealing with the demonic," (Section VII of the essay "Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session, Prayers and Commands to

Neutralize Demonic Interference,” on the Ministry Aids page of www.kclehman.com). The additional material just referenced will help provide the context from which to most accurately understand the “Dealing with the demonic” section in this essay.

IV. General Introductory Prayer

A number of those in our training groups have noted that we consistently include several statements in our opening prayers, in addition to the prayer for the facilitator and the parameters for the demonic. They felt these additional pieces were valuable, especially for those who are just getting started, and asked that we write them out. We have therefore included these additional pieces in the sample opening prayer and parameters below.

Angelic assistance: See “General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids” (available as free download from www.kclehman.com) for comments and discussion. Feel free to omit this part of the prayer if you are not comfortable with it.

V. Miscellaneous Comments:

Biblical basis for commands setting parameters for the demonic: These commands, like much of what Christians experienced in dealing with the demonic have learned, are extra-biblical, but not un-biblical. The principle on which they are based – that we have authority in Christ over all forces of evil – is certainly biblical (see “*Binding*,” below). Nothing contained in the prayers contradicts the Bible. We have put together this material after carefully studying teaching from other experienced ministers, and also after thousands of hours of our own experience. It seems to be helpful in actual clinical work.

Source of authority for commands setting parameters for the demonic: It is important to keep clearly in mind that we give these commands, not in our own strength, but in the authority of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Eph.1:19-23, see also “*Binding*,” below). Therefore, whenever a demonic spirit chooses to disobey us, it is choosing to disobey the authority of Jesus through us. If any demonic spirit contests our authority, we delegate “up” the chain of command by commanding them to go and deal with Jesus directly.

“*Binding*.” There is much scholarly debate about the meaning of “binding” and “loosing” found particularly in Matthew 16:19 and 18:18. While some believe it refers to the Christian’s authority over evil spiritual forces, many do not. Our usage of the word is not intended to invoke the authority referred to in these verses. Rather we are using the term as a simple way to express the idea of temporarily rendering powerless any evil which may be attached to some wound, deception, or sin in a person’s life. That we as Christians do have authority over evil spirits is attested elsewhere in Scripture (Matthew 10:1, Luke 9:1, Luke 10:17-20).

Too much focus on the demonic? We realize that it may feel like we give too much attention to the demonic in our opening prayer. Our experience is that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Surgery provides a good analogy – if you take the time and energy to use sterile technique (which seems like a lot of hassle initially), you don’t spend much time worrying about infection after the initial sterilization procedures. If you “save” time and energy by cutting corners on your sterile technique, you spend months fighting wound infections and other infection related complications. As mentioned in the footnote above, our experience is that we now spend very little time and energy dealing with demonic interference during the actual ministry session, and when we do deal with demonic interference it is much less messy than it used to be. Our perception is that

regular use of a thorough opening prayer has contributed to this positive change. This lack of “drama” in dealing with the demonic helps those to whom we minister to learn a strong faith perspective regarding the demonic: the enemy is real, but he and all his minions are defeated, and must obey the authority of Jesus. We find that our clients and those in our training groups quickly learn to deal with demonic interference like they are squashing mosquitoes or disinfecting toilets – they are not afraid, and therefore don’t give the demons any more attention than is necessary to get them out of the way, or to obtain information Jesus wants us to have.

“Spiritual forces” vs “demonic spirits”: Some may notice that in the updated versions of our sample opening prayers, we use the term “spiritual forces,” as opposed to “demonic spirits.” We have made this change in response to several of our colleagues who have shared both Biblical study and observations from their personal experiences that indicate complexity in the spiritual realm. The short summary regarding one part of our colleagues’ thoughts is that the spiritual forces opposing the Lord’s work include more than just demonic spirits, and that addressing our commands to only demonic spirits may provide a “loophole” for other spiritual forces. There is a lot regarding these thoughts that we are still pondering, but it seemed like one very simple measure was to use a more general term, such as “spiritual forces,” in place of the narrower “demonic spirits.”

“Condensing” the opening prayer: As discussed in the “Sample prayers and commands: how to use them” section of “General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids,” our “sample” prayers and commands can provide repetition learning for the facilitator. For example, our perception is that it is good to know the parameters regarding demonic manifestation well enough to be able to immediately recognize when one is being broken. So we included the specific parameters under “You will manifest only as the true Lord Jesus allows and requires” each time we used the opening prayer until we carried a sharp, working knowledge of the specifics. Now we streamline the prayer, and simply say “You will manifest only as the true Lord Jesus allows and requires.” But we carry the specifics in our minds, and know that they are implied.

We have also tried to develop our “samples” so that they provide teaching/discipleship for the person receiving ministry and/or those we are training. For example, most of the paragraph in section 5 and the first sentence in section 6 are included primarily for teaching/discipling those we train and/or minister to. If I (Karl) am not in a training setting and/or the person receiving ministry already understands these principles, I will streamline the whole paragraph in section 5 to something like, “Lord Jesus, we submit to You the issue of compliance. We ask that You would deal with all evil spiritual forces that fail to comply. In the name of Jesus, we command all evil spiritual forces: at the moment you fail to comply, you will go and deal with the true Lord Jesus directly.”

V. Regarding the place of our ministry aids in Theophostic® Ministry: Dr. Ed Smith, developer of Theophostic® Ministry, reports a number of people who seem to be confused about our place in the Theophostic® community. Dr. Smith has specifically mentioned people who think that our ministry aids are a required/necessary part of Theophostic® Ministry. We want to be very clear about this. In the explanatory discussions above, we discuss the thoughts, personal experiences, other references, and principles behind the sample prayers and commands at the end of the document. Please consider our discussion, consider for yourself how to interpret the experiences we describe, and then decide whether/how to use this ministry aid. Many have found our ministry aids to be helpful tools as a part of various forms of emotional healing ministry, but it is *not* necessary to use our ministry aids in order to do Theophostic® prayer ministry.

We also want to be clear that the Immanuel approach shares a number of important principles and process components with Theophostic[®], but that the Immanuel approach also includes principles and process components that are not part of Theophostic[®]. For example, starting each session with positive memory recall, deliberate appreciation, and re-establishing an interactive connection with Jesus are not parts of what we understand Dr. Smith to define as Theophostic[®] prayer ministry.¹⁷

[®]Theophostic Ministry is a trademark of Dr. Ed Smith and Alathia Ministries, Inc., of Campbellsville, Kentucky.

¹⁷ See “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who Is with Us ~ Part I: A Brief Introduction to the Immanuel Approach,” for a detailed discussion of the similarities and differences between the Immanuel approach and Theophostic[®] Prayer Ministry.

Sample Opening Prayer and Parameters

(Revision 12/12/2012)

Requests pertaining to the Immanuel approach:

Lord Jesus, we ask that You would remind person receiving of times (he/she) has experienced your presence in special ways. Bring forward one of these memories of special connection, help (him/her) to reconnect with this experience of being with you, and stir up appreciation in (his/her) heart. Lord, please refresh (his/her) perception of Your presence, and reestablish a living, interactive connection, right here and now in the present, as the foundation for Your work here today.

Prayer for the Facilitator:

“Jesus, I humbly acknowledge that sin, wounds, and lies distort my understanding and hinder my ability to follow You” (*if you are aware of being stirred up in any way at the beginning of the session, take a moment to silently acknowledge the specifics to the Lord*). “I ask for special grace during this time, that You would carry my unresolved issues. Help me to stand with person receiving spiritually and emotionally, and to fulfill the part you want me to play in his/her healing. Help me to listen well to person receiving and to You, and to follow Your lead, not my own woundedness. Bless me with the unselfconsciousness and confidence that come from knowing it is You who heals, not I.”

Dealing with the Demonic:

1. “In the name of the true Lord Jesus, we take authority over all evil spiritual forces in or with me, and especially attached to any of my wounds or lies. We command that you be bound in and under the authority of the true Lord Jesus. You may not hinder or oppose the Lord’s work through me as the facilitator in any way.”
2. “Lord Jesus, we ask you to appoint representatives for all evil spiritual forces present. We command all evil spiritual forces to be bound to and under the representatives that the true Lord Jesus has appointed. You may only communicate with each other as the true Lord Jesus requires. You may not strengthen each other or assist each other in any way. You must be cut off from all outside spiritual forces of every kind. You will obey all commands we give.”

3. “We command, in the name of the true Lord Jesus, to all evil spiritual forces present:

You must be stripped of all your schemes, plans, agendas, and orders. You must lay these at the feet of the true Lord Jesus now.

You must now return to Jesus and to _____ everything you have stolen from him/her from the moment of his/her conception to the present.

You must be stripped away from, and release, every part of _____’s mind.”

(Setting parameters for manifestation) “You will manifest only and exactly as the true Lord Jesus allows and requires” (*to the facilitator: you can include details below if you find it helpful to remind yourself of the rules*):

- “You must speak and manifest only to and through the representatives the true Lord Jesus has appointed.
- You will reveal exactly what the true Lord Jesus requires, clearly and unambiguously, in whatever way He requires you to reveal this information.

- You will not cause switching between internal parts of _____'s mind, except as the true Lord Jesus requires to provide information He wants us to have.
 - You will not cause bodily harm, mental pain, or unruly behavior.
 - You will not use profanity and you will not speak disrespectfully.”
4. “Lord Jesus, we ask you to reveal any specific issues we need to address in order to expose and remove demonic interference, anything we need to address in order to destroy the enemy’s place and authority in _____’s life.”
 5. “Lord Jesus, we ask that you would help us understand the spiritual principles and rules that you have established to govern Your creation, and that you would help us issue commands that are consistent with Your principles and rules. We acknowledge that there is so much we don’t know and that we cannot see. We ask that you would be the judge regarding whether the spiritual forces present have complied with our commands, and that you would deal with disobedience whenever it occurs. We ask that You would help us discern the reason whenever spiritual forces fail to obey our commands, so that we can find and resolve whatever is allowing them to disobey.”
 6. “We are giving all of these commands, not in our own strength, but in the authority of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. All spiritual forces that fail to comply fully and immediately with any command that we give, at the moment you fail to comply you must go and deal with the true Lord Jesus directly.”

General Introductory Prayer

(Optional, regarding angels): “Lord, we ask you to send the angels you have prepared to assist us in this ministry time today, that they might encourage and strengthen _____ and myself, that they might surround and weaken all evil spiritual forces that are present, and that they might enforce compliance. Please give them the power and authority they require to accomplish your will.”

“Lord Jesus, we stand together, and affirm the truth in faith, that You are here with us and that You love us – that even as we speak, You are preparing the way in the spiritual realm for _____’s forgiveness, deliverance, healing, and freedom. We thank you for, and release with our prayers, the victory You have already accomplished through Your death and resurrection and the healing you have already provided through your wounds.”

“We ask you to anoint us now, that we might work together as a team in the center of your good plans for healing, forgiveness, freedom, and deliverance.”

“Lord, You know recipient’s name. Call (his/her) whole mind and heart, call every part of (him/her) forward. Help every part of him/her to hear Your voice, and to know the truth about Your heart and character – about Your gentleness and Your carefulness, so that (his/her) whole mind and heart can cooperate with Your healing work.”

“Lord Jesus, please guide every thought, image, memory, emotion, and physical sensation coming into _____’s heart and mind, and into my own heart and mind for guidance; and please give _____ the strength and grace to choose to see the whole truth, and to connect with the emotions he/she needs to feel in order to receive your healing.”

Sample “Condensed” Opening Prayer and Parameters

(Revised 12/12/2012)

Requests pertaining to the Immanuel approach:

“Lord Jesus, we ask that You would remind *person receiving* of times (he/she) has experienced your presence in special ways. Bring forward one of these memories of special connection, help (him/her) to reconnect with this experience of being with you, and stir up appreciation in (his/her) heart. Lord, please refresh (his/her) perception of Your presence, and reestablish a living, interactive connection, right here and now in the present, as the foundation for Your work here today.”

Prayer for the Facilitator:

“Jesus, I humbly acknowledge that sin, wounds, and lies distort my understanding and hinder my ability to follow You” (*if you are aware of being stirred up in any way at the beginning of the session, take a moment to silently acknowledge the specifics to the Lord*). “I ask for special grace during this time, that You would carry my unresolved issues so that they would not get in the way.”

Dealing with the Demonic:

“Lord Jesus, we ask you to appoint representatives for all evil spiritual forces that are present.”

“We command all evil spiritual forces to be bound to the representatives that the Lord Jesus has appointed. You will only manifest and communicate with each other as He allows and requires, you may not assist each other in any way, and you must be cut off from all outside spiritual forces. You must now return to Jesus and to _____ everything you have stolen from him/her. You must be stripped away from, and release, every part of _____’s mind. You must be stripped of all your schemes, plans, agendas, and orders, and lay these at the feet of the Lord Jesus now.”

“Lord Jesus, we submit to You the issue of compliance. We ask that You would deal with all evil spiritual forces that fail to comply. In the name of Jesus, we command all evil spiritual forces: at the moment you fail to comply, you will go and deal with the true Lord Jesus directly.”

General Introductory Prayer

“Lord Jesus, we stand together, and affirm the truth in faith, that You are here with us and that You love us – that even as we speak, You are preparing the way in the spiritual realm for _____’s forgiveness, deliverance, healing, and freedom. We thank you for, and release with our prayers, the victory You have already accomplished through Your death and resurrection and the healing you have already provided through your wounds.”

“Lord, You know *recipient’s name*. Call (his/her) whole mind and heart, call every part of (him/her) forward. Help every part of him/her to hear Your voice, and to know the truth about Your heart and character – about Your gentleness and Your carefulness, so that (his/her) whole mind and heart can cooperate with Your healing work.”

“Lord Jesus, please guide every thought, image, memory, emotion, and physical sensation coming into _____’s heart and mind, and into my own heart and mind for guidance. In Your name, we thank You for all these things. Amen.”