



## APPRECIATION—THE BEGINNING

Immanuel Prayer is not only something you can use to help other people, it is something that can have a big impact in your personal relationship with Jesus. What you are learning here can help you make major changes in your relationship with Jesus and with other people.

Appreciation coming from a positive memory is the basis of the whole process of interacting with God and finding healing for our hearts. So we are going to go over the process that is involved with coming to a place of appreciation and perceiving the presence of Jesus with us.

### Remember a Positive Memory

You have spent a little time finding some positive memories of your own. And you need to practice doing that so that you can help the person you are working with to recall a positive memory (a memory for which they are truly grateful and that is free from painful splinters) and remember it until they experience appreciation.

It is best if the positive memory does not have pain associated with it. Not something like, well, my friend and I had a big fight but...then we reconciled and it was great. Choose something else that is not involving negative emotions or pain at some point, prior to the memory or later.

You may need to make some suggestions such as the ones we already gave you.

### Expanding the Memory

As a person recalls the memory, help them to immerse themselves in it and recall as many details as possible (e.g., what they saw, heard, smelled, felt on their skin; how they were feeling; what they were thinking; who they were with).

“Now I would like you to close your eyes, imagine yourself being back inside of the original experience, and describe the memory in as much detail as possible.” For example:

- What did you see? Hear? Smell? Taste? Feel on your skin?
- What thoughts and emotions were you having at the time?
- What thoughts and emotions come as you think about it now?
- How did your body feel back in the memory? Where do you feel it in your body? Where do you feel the emotion?

Allow the recipient to describe the memory as it flows naturally, and then gently prompt them regarding any pieces they might have missed. Also ask them to just stay *t h e r e* in the memory.

"It's important for you to continue to stay in that memory for the entire prayer time. If keeping your eyes closed helps you do this, then please do." "What is the one moment that you would feel the most emotion?" or "What's your favorite part?"

Coach recipient to get to a place of appreciation, where they are thankful for this memory and some specific details of it.

### Example

One memory I have from my childhood is sitting together outside with my grandmother at her house. I was maybe 4 or 5 years old. It was a summer day. And she was reading a poem to me about a little girl who was enjoying swinging.

As I shared this memory, my facilitator asked me some of the above questions to help the memory become clearer. So then I remembered the big bush we were sitting beside, how secure I felt being with my grandmother. How good it felt that she was just paying attention to me. The slight breeze in the air even though it was very warm.

And so, you can help someone remember details that deepen the memory, make it more real and helps the joy of the moment spread into appreciation. Be aware that people will have many different experiences and many people will have a hard time expressing themselves or even remembering details. It's very important not to rush the process. Give them time to think. Don't worry about silence. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as to when you should ask another question or move on to the next step.

### **Perceiving Jesus' Presence in the Memory**

Help the recipient to welcome Jesus into the positive memory. We all know that God is omnipresent. It is a Biblical truth that we are applying here. Even though they may not have perceived His presence at the time this memory took place, God was present.

Encourage the recipient to enjoy being in the memory, and then you can invite them to give thanks to Jesus/God for this memory out loud or in their hearts. (As they thank Him they are actually attuning to Him.)

As this appreciation is stirred up inside of them you can then invite them to express the following:

"I want you to pray something like, 'Jesus, I know, in faith, that you were with me when I was (name memory - e.g., enjoying the park). I welcome You to be with me now, in this memory. Help me to perceive Your living, interactive presence.'"

Help them to describe whatever comes into their awareness, and especially to describe details about Jesus' presence.

"As you are able, describe everything that comes into your awareness, regardless of whether it feels important, makes sense, or is neatly packaged. That is any Bible verses, words, sounds, images, feelings, memories, even tastes, everything that you sense."

When they have perceived Jesus, encourage them to focus their attention on Jesus and describe as much about Him to you as they can. They don't need to see Him, only perceive His presence.

"Tell me as much about Jesus as you can. What is He doing? How does it feel having Jesus with you in this memory? If you can see Him, what does He look like?"

Example:

Following up with my positive memory of my grandmother, my facilitator asked me to stay in the memory and then perceive Jesus' presence in that memory, based on the fact that God is always with us, so He was present there too.

As I thought about it I could "see" Jesus on the other side of my grandmother looking at me. This is not a perception based on an actual figure or face, although some people do perceive that way, but just sensing that He was there and that He was smiling at me.

People will have many different experiences in this area as to how they perceive Jesus or God's presence with them. One really good question in all cases is: How does it feel having Jesus with you in this memory?"

To me it was an amazing experience to actually perceive how Jesus was "really" there in my childhood. Yes, I went to Sunday School. I was taught about Him. I was taught that He loved me. But the experience of sensing His presence was very special.

### **Connecting with Jesus Interactively**

Now coach them to focus on Jesus and ask how Jesus feels about being with them. Coach them to observe and describe whatever comes into their awareness.

"Okay, now I would like you to focus on Jesus and ask Him, 'Lord, how do you feel about being with me in this memory?'"

Pause and give them time to respond.

"Ask Jesus, 'Is there anything else you want to show me, give me, or say to me, Lord?'"

Pause and give them time to respond.

### **Basic Troubleshooting (If Needed)**

If the recipient is unable to perceive Jesus' (or God's) presence, here are a couple troubleshooting things you can use. Your whole time with them is based on their establishing a connection with Jesus, so this is the pivotal point.

**Intervention 1:** Have the recipient report to you everything that comes into their awareness. Have them describe in detail the positive memory and what happened or changed after they invited Jesus into the memory or what is happening in them.

"I want to ask you again to describe in detail your positive memory and what happened or changed as you invited Jesus into it. Describe in detail anything that comes into your awareness, regardless of whether it feels important or makes any sense."

**Intervention 2:** Coach the recipient to look to Jesus for answers, understanding, insight, ways forward. Coach them to engage with Jesus at every step, with every insight, stuck place, obstacle. Have them ask the Lord for guidance regarding blockages.

"In faith we know that Jesus is in the memory with you, even though you may not perceive him. Ask the Lord, 'What is in the way of my being able to perceive your presence, Lord?' then notice and describe whatever comes into your awareness."

When Jesus makes clear what is blocking them from connecting, have them describe it to Jesus and ask Him how this is keeping them from hearing from God or establishing an interactive connection.

"Now I want you to describe this to Jesus and ask Him why it's blocking your interactive connection and then what to do about it. You can pray something like this "Jesus I notice these things in my heart..... How are they keeping us from establishing an interactive connection? What can I do with them?"

### **Conclusion**

No matter what your purpose is in Immanuel Prayer the positive memory, leading to appreciation, leading to establishing an interactive connection with Jesus, will always be the beginning. And it may be the only thing you can do at this point. But what a beautiful thing to help people move into the positive, to learn to be thankful, and to learn that Jesus is really there with them and always has been!

