

## IMMANUEL AS A LIFESTYLE

The problem in our prayer life, and why we feel like we aren't hearing from God, is that it is all on our agenda. We want Him to answer "our" questions. When do we listen for His questions? We want Him to solve our problems, preferably immediately. When do we sit and quietly just be with Him? Just enjoy Him. Just thank Him. Without immediately giving Him the rundown on all of our difficulties. Yes, He wants to hear all about us, even when He knows, but in order to have a meaningful relationship, there should be two-way communication. Not just a monologue.

Dr. Lehman has used Immanuel Prayer Sessions with thousands of people for the purpose of them finding healing for their hearts, but he has become very committed to the idea that the first, number one, highest priority item on our agenda should be improving our personal, interactive connection with the Lord. We need to build these principles and tools into our lifestyle as everyday habits that will steadily increase our intimacy with God.

- 1. Train your brain to look for things you appreciate throughout the day.** This expands YOUR capacity for joy. When something good happens, see Jesus there with you. Tell someone else about it.
- 2. Keep a list of positive memories** to refer to—on your phone, or somewhere that you will it regularly. Take one of them out every day and savor it. It is surprising (or maybe not!) how quickly we forget these in the turmoil and stress of life.
- 3. Spend time every day quietly in appreciation of Jesus.** Just enjoying His presence. Not talking. Just listening for His voice.
- 4. Make it a habit to check your own relational circuits.** It will dramatically increase your ability to minister to other people, and to your own family.

### Relational Circuit Checklist

Here is a checklist you can use to evaluate where you are at.

- ✓ I just want to make a problem, person or feeling go away.
- ✓ I don't want to listen to what others feel or say.
- ✓ My mind is "locked onto" something upsetting.
- ✓ I don't want to be connected to ? (someone I usually like)
- ✓ I just want to get away or fight or I freeze.
- ✓ I more aggressively interrogate, judge and fix others.

If you answered YES to ANY of those questions then your RCs are OFF. Everything related to relational conflicts will turn out better when our relational circuits are back ON.

One simple question you can ask yourself is, "Can I feel positive feelings about the person (or God) right now?" This is not just, can I say something nice about them. It is seeing if a genuine positive thought feels true in a way that opens us up to interact with God or people. Otherwise we see only the problems and not the people. They are not resources to help us. They are "interfering".

If you sense your relational circuits are off, or not fully open:

- Learn to quiet yourself with the Shalom My Body exercises.
- Receive attunement from Jesus and/or a trusted friend.
- Spend time in deliberate appreciation.

- 5. Commit to your own healing journey.** Ask Jesus regularly what He wants to show you about yourself. Are you quickly angry? Ask Him to show you why. To take you to the root of it. Are you

afraid? Ask Him. He has the answers. And yes, sometimes He uses other people in our lives to point out problems, or to help us see Jesus' solutions.

**6. Learn to connect with Jesus and tune into His presence** in your everyday life. Make it a habit to ask, "Jesus, show me where you are." Not just when you are having your quiet time. But...you may need to even do it then. So often we are going through the motions without connecting to Jesus at all.

There are so many ways that Immanuel Prayer and the principles can be applied to our lives. All of you know that we are supposed to give thanks to the Lord for everything. But it moves it up one step when you choose to be grateful for a very specific memory. Pulling out your positive memories that you have worked on will give you a certain level of joy, depending on what your state of mind is. But the real comfort in them is sensing Jesus' presence there and thanking Him for that. Re-establishing your appreciation with Him.

If you have a hard time calling up a positive memory, either one you have already savored in the past or a new one, you will know that your relational circuits are definitely turned off. It is time to pray and ask the Lord to help you re-connect with Him. And if you have been indulging in a sin, or choosing to nourish your negative emotions, you will need to ask His forgiveness and for His restoration. Psalm 130:7 reminds us that with the Lord there is always redemption—and abundant redemption.

### **Immanuel Journaling**

You may not like the idea of journaling, but think about writing down your thankfulness to the Lord, actually feeling a connection with Him and then writing down how He responds to you. It has a huge impact on our growing awareness of how close Jesus is to us, how much He wants to be involved in our lives. And it is beautiful to re-read what He has said to you because our memories are often so short.

If you don't like the idea of journaling, send Jesus a text message about your thankfulness to Him. And then send a text "from Him" with His response to you.

One thing we need to saturate our lives with is the truth that we are not alone. God is with us. He WANTS to be with us. He delights in us. He loves us.

Zephaniah 3:17 "For the LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs." NLT

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**