

TESTIMONIES

From *The Immanuel Approach for Emotional Healing and for Life* by Dr. Karl Lehman, published by Immanuel Publishing, Evanston, IL, 2016. pp 24-28

Our friends and colleagues who are using the Immanuel approach are also seeing dramatically positive results.

A. The Immanuel approach with persecuted believers: For example, Kim Campbell, recently the medical director for a well known ministry that serves the persecuted church, used the Immanuel approach to provide emotional healing for traumatized/persecuted Christians in countries such as Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, the Philippines, Ethiopia, Iraq, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, and Colombia. The following is one of the many amazing stories of healing that Kim has shared with us.

David 17 was born into a deeply religious Muslim family in a Muslim village in a Muslim country in southwest Asia, and his family members and neighbors became very upset when he and one of his uncles became Christians. Not surprisingly, his family and neighbors became even more upset when his uncle began openly telling others about his faith, when David began preaching, and when people were delivered and miraculously healed in response to David's prayers. David was twenty six years old in July of 2006 when his uncle was abducted and executed by a group of enraged extremists, and a month and a half later two men with AK-47s came into the family sweet shop where David worked and emptied 50 rounds, leaving David lying in a pool of blood with 11 gunshot wounds. His survival is miraculous, since the doctor at the local hospital refused to treat him, and he therefore did not receive any medical care until he got to a hospital in a distant city eight hours later. But his left arm was so badly damaged that it had to be amputated.

The ministry mentioned earlier helped David with the cost of his medications and with a prosthesis for his left arm, and when Kim visited in October of 2007 to provide medical follow-up he also asked David about the psychological aspect of the trauma. David stated that he was "all right," but his face and voice looked and sounded depressed, and with further probing Kim discovered that he had full blown Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), including flashbacks of the machine gun fire during the attack. Kim then lead him through the Immanuel process, and Jesus showed David that he had always been with him, that he was with him throughout every moment of the attack, and that he would always be with him in the future. At the end of the ministry time, when Kim asked him to go back to the memory of being shot, David sat quietly, with a surprised but peaceful look on his face, as he reported that he could still recall being startled by the shooting but that he was now aware of Jesus' presence with him, in the memory, even during the shooting, and that the memory was no longer distressing.

We have heard more amazing stories of healing from Sarah Yoder, a woman serving with this same organization and one of the members of a mission team that has been working with persecuted/traumatized women and children in Colombia. In certain areas of Colombia, Marxist guerillas and various other paramilitary groups have been attacking the church, and part of this attack has been to target pastors for assassination. There are now hundreds of women and children in Colombia whose husbands/fathers have been murdered because of their involvement in Christian ministry. An especially horrifying part of the story is that, in their efforts to intimidate the church, the assassins deliberately try to make the murders as traumatic as possible for the survivors. So they will routinely do things like going into the pastor's home and killing him in front of his wife and children. Not surprisingly, almost all of these women and children develop PTSD, most of them also develop associated problems such as bitterness and depression, and many of them withdraw from involvement in church and ministry.

However, God's power to heal is even greater than the enemy's power to destroy. As I write this (March 2010), it has been just two weeks since Charlotte and I had the privilege of spending an evening with Sarah, hearing first-hand accounts of the redemptive healing the Lord has been providing for these women and children. In September of 2008, Kim, Sarah, and two other women went as a mission team to work with 48 of these widows. The mission team was able to lead the Colombian widows through the Immanuel process, and every single one of them appeared to receive profound healing. The team was able to go back for a second visit in July of 2009 and worked with 60 more widows, once again leading them through the Immanuel process, and once again observing that every single participant appeared to receive profound healing. Initially, almost all of the women described persistent despair as one of their heaviest burdens; but their healing encounters with the Lord have resulted in such dramatic transformations from despair to joy that acquaintances have made spontaneous comments about the participants being "changed women." The women participating in these Immanuel missions have also consistently reported resolution of the various signs and symptoms of PTSD.

When we met with Sarah two weeks ago, she said that all of the women they have been able to follow have continued to do well, with continued freedom from PTSD, continued freedom from depression, and continued restoration of joy. Furthermore, *most of these women now report that they have been able to use the Immanuel approach to facilitate emotional healing for their children.*

The following story is just one example of the kind of trauma the Lord has been working with and the kind of redemption he has been providing. Pastor Enrico, his wife, Rebecca, and their family lived on a small farm in an area where the Marxist guerillas and other paramilitary groups frequently skirmish for control. One day in 1995 soldiers came to the farm. Soldiers often came to the farm, usually demanding food or livestock, but on this day they decided to assassinate pastor Enrico. No comments. No questions. They just shot him, leaving Rebecca without a husband and their four small children without a father. Rebecca developed PTSD, became depressed, and withdrew from ministry. At the time of the mission team's visit in September of 2008 it had been 14 years since she had lost her husband, but her pain seemed as fresh as if he had died the day before. And her children, in addition to developing PTSD and withdrawing from church, expressed intense and persistent hatred towards the perpetrators. The team was able to lead Rebecca through the Immanuel process, with the Lord providing profound healing for the trauma of her husband's murder; and not only has Rebecca remained free of PTSD and depression since this healing work, but she has also been able to use the Immanuel approach with her children, all of whom have also experienced profound healing and are now free of PTSD and depression. In fact, the Lord's healing work has been so complete that the children have been able to forgive the men who killed their father, Rebecca has returned to ministry, starting a house church that is now bursting at the seams, and the children, on their own initiative, have started a youth group that is also now bursting at the seams. [Both the house church (40-50 members) and the youth group (30-40 members) have outgrown Rebecca's home, so that participants must now bring their own chairs so that they can meet in the street in front of the house.]

.....

C. The Immanuel approach with groups: One of the most exciting things about the Immanuel approach is that several of the new components make it possible to design group Immanuel exercises that are both safe and effective.²⁰ I have worked closely with our colleague, Dr. E. James Wilder, in developing Immanuel approach group exercises, and we have seen dramatically positive results with these exercises. For example, during the winter of 2010 Dr. Wilder visited a country in Asia that is recovering from many years of civil war and from massive trauma associated with a recent natural disaster. Charlotte and I had the privilege of spending an evening with him less than a month after he returned from this trip, and his report was very encouraging.

Dr. Wilder spent a week with a team of 45 ministers, mental health professionals, and lay people, training them in the use of the Immanuel approach, and especially focusing on the Immanuel approach tools that can be used in group settings. The core of his teaching program was to repeatedly take the trainees through the group exercises themselves. From the very first day the participants began receiving healing in their own lives as they “practiced.” By the middle of the week every single person was connecting with Jesus and receiving healing each time the group went through the exercises. And by the end of the week every participant had received healing for a number of different traumatic memories.

Here are a few examples:

- There was a group of participants from the war zone who had trouble trusting the rest of the trainees. At the beginning of the week they tried to avoid anybody from the larger group and they would not participate in activities with the larger group. However, after receiving healing these people were able to participate joyfully with the rest of the group.
- One of the pastors attending the training had been “executed,” along with a number of other believers who had been rounded up by anti-Christian militants. After spraying the group of Christians with bullets, the militants thought they were all dead and buried the bodies in a shallow mass grave. Amazingly, this pastor revived from the initial shock of being shot, dug himself out of the shallow grave, made it back to his home, and eventually recovered from the physical injuries; but, not surprisingly, he had also been psychologically traumatized and he displayed dysfunctional reactions to reminders of the trauma. By the end of the week these traumatic memories had been healed, and he appeared to be free of the PTSD symptoms associated with these events.