

Title: “An Immanuel Saint Passes: Dr. John Now Face to Face with Jesus”

April 14, 2025

Greetings all,

I’m sending this note to let you know the sad news that Dr. John Curlin is now with the Lord. He died suddenly on Monday morning April 7.

This is the “Doctor John” I share about in so many of my stories. This is the guy who did an Immanuel session with a woman in Guatemala, and then realized that her paralyzed leg had been healed as a “collateral benefit” of her emotional and spiritual healing work with Jesus.¹ This is the guy who facilitated a beautiful session for his granddaughter, in which the Lord totally resolved her crippling fear of being kidnapped.² And this is the guy who had the profound, intense encounter with Jesus regarding his fears that he might not be doing a good enough job stewarding the gifts that the Lord had given him:

“One morning, after he had been struggling with this anxious insecurity for several days, he made an Immanuel invitation for the Lord to be with him during his personal quiet time: ‘Jesus, please be with me here. Help me to perceive Your presence. What do you want me to know about this?’ And then, suddenly, he had a vivid, intense, detailed visual image of Jesus’ face, immediately in front of him. Jesus was less than a foot away, looking directly into his eyes, and Jesus spoke so clearly into his mind that it was almost as if he were hearing the Lord’s audible voice. The content of Jesus’ message was pretty straightforward—He spoke a few simple words along the lines of, ‘There’s nothing you need to do to earn my love—it’s already been taken care of, and I am just so *thrilled* to be with you!’ John stated that he could somehow feel the Lord’s incredibly intense love pouring out to him as Jesus spoke these words....

As John was finishing his description of the whole experience, he commented, ‘It almost seemed crazy. . . . It was hard to fully comprehend or absorb. . . . I felt like I was in another world.’ John also told me that the whole experience was so overwhelming (in a good way) that he wept intensely as Jesus was speaking to him, and that he continued to sob uncontrollably for more than an hour after the encounter had ended.

....this dramatic encounter also bore lasting fruit. John reports that since this encounter with Jesus, he has never again had the least difficulty with ‘Am I doing enough?’ or any of the other anxious, insecure thoughts mentioned earlier.”³

And there are many stories that neither Dr. John nor I have ever gotten around to putting in writing. To help the wider Immanuel Approach community more fully appreciate his ministry, I will take the time to share a couple of these previously-unpublished stories.

¹ *The Immanuel Approach: For Emotional Healing and for Life*, pages 441-442; Immanuel Approach intro books, pages 61-62.

² *The Immanuel Approach: For Emotional Healing and for Life*, pages 117-119.

³ *The Immanuel Approach: For Emotional Healing and for Life*, page 390.

This first story is from John's work with a mission team ministering to families living in the huge public dumps outside of cities in Mexico. His first priority on this particular trip was to provide sessions for the people on the mission team, so that their own unresolved trauma would not undermine their ministry by causing burnout. But occasionally he would run out of team members to pray for and just start praying with the people living in the dump. He commented that the Lord seemed to have special compassion for these "least of these," and commented that they seemed to be especially able to perceive the Lord's presence. For example, one of the people he prayed with was a seven-year-old girl, and when he coached her to close her eyes so that there would be fewer distractions hindering her from sensing the Lord's presence, she responded with, "I don't need to close my eyes. He's standing right there," as she pointed to a spot right next to where John was sitting. (John's sense was that she might also have been thinking, "How is it possible that you can't see Him?")

Another of my favorite Dr. John stories comes from a season during which he and Leeba spent time each year with their daughter and son-in-law in Panama. Whenever he was in Panama, he would spend Saturday mornings offering Immanuel Approach sessions to anyone who showed up at their church and wanted to pray with him. And whenever someone came in, he would always ask them what had brought them to a church basement on Saturday morning asking for prayer.

One Saturday morning, the person asking for prayer said they were there because Maria⁴ had sent them. "She said I should come here on Saturday morning and ask to pray with Dr. John." And then a couple of weeks later, another person said the same thing. And then a couple of weeks later, yet *another* person said the same thing. This continued for several months, and when ten or twelve people had given this same answer, John finally decided he needed to talk to Maria.

Now, Maria was a woman who had received Immanuel Prayer earlier, and who had experienced particularly profound, beautiful transformation as a result. And when John finally asked her, "What's going on? I've had ten or twelve people tell me that they are coming for prayer because you sent them." She responded with, "This is the craziest thing. I'm just walking around Panama City, minding my own business, and complete strangers come up to me and say, 'Who are you? What do you have? And how can I get some?!' And I tell them to come here on Saturday morning and ask for prayer with Dr. John, and that you will help them talk to Jesus."

I also want to honor Dr. John for the way he led by example with respect to getting his own healing. Many people have asked me to pray with their children, so that they won't have to worry so much about their children's struggles and/or so that their children will be easier to deal with. These are certainly understandable requests! Who among us doesn't want Jesus to heal/fix the people in our lives who are difficult and/or struggling? But Dr. John embraced the more courageous option of leading by example. He asked me to help him work with Jesus to

⁴ Not her real name (no safety or privacy concerns -- I just can't remember her actual name).

identify and resolve his *own* blind-spots and triggered reactions, and then when his children saw the steadily increasing transformation in his life, they eventually *asked him* to help them work with Jesus to do their own healing work.

This work with his own children required additional courage and grace, since he, himself, was the source of pain in many of the memories that his children went to with Jesus. On a number of occasions, he talked to me about how he never would have been able to facilitate this healing work for his children without first doing so much of his own healing work. No one else I know has embraced this particular challenge with as much humility, integrity, and courage as Dr. John. (If you ever wonder whether doing your own healing work with Jesus is something that only weak, soft, non-leader people do – well, you never met Dr. John.)

Even with the Immanuel Approach, our perception of the living, tangible presence of Jesus is still “through a glass darkly,” but John is now *truly* seeing Him “face to face” (1 Cor 13:12). John has been a colleague, friend, and brother in Christ for almost twenty-five years, and I will miss him dearly. But he has fought the good fight and has finished the race (2 Tim 4:7), and he now abides in the presence of Jesus. I’m pretty sure that there is nowhere else in the universe that he would rather be.

Blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

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