



Understanding and Dealing with Demonic Oppression and Interference: Introduction

(©Copyright 2000 K.D.Lehman MD, Initial post 2001, Last Revised 1/17/26)

With respect to the physical creation, our understanding of the patterns in creation and our confidence regarding our understanding determine our practical/usable authority (for example, the ability to build a bridge and drive over it). We believe that these same principles apply to the spiritual creation as well. Our experience is that the enemy can tell when we are confused and/or lack confidence, and he is happy to take advantage of our muddy thinking and lack of faith. We are constantly trying to increase the clarity of our understanding regarding our authority in Christ and the principles involved in dealing with demonic interference, because the more clearly we understand these the more effectively we are able to exercise our authority in tearing down the enemy's strongholds and in preventing the enemy from oppressing us or interfering with the Lord's work in our lives. We perceive that the Church has been given a much larger gospel than we usually live out, and we believe that understanding the patterns in the spiritual creation and walking in our appropriate spiritual authority are required for releasing the fullness of this gospel.

Introductory thoughts regarding demonic “infection”: As might be expected for a physician with degrees in physics, chemistry, and biology,¹ I started out very skeptical about demonic phenomena. However, I have become increasingly convinced of this reality as I have heard others (that I trust) describe their experiences and as I have personally observed clinical phenomena which are hard to explain in any other way. (During my first several years of working with EMDR and Theophostic-based² tools, I observed visible manifestations associated with demonic opposition/interference at least every week, and sometimes almost everyday.)³ Sometimes this is in the form of observable physical manifestations, such as neurological twitching that I know medically cannot be produced voluntarily and that resolves immediately with prayer in Jesus'

¹ This may seem a bit crazy to some of you, but I indeed completed majors in physics, chemistry, *and* biology (with a minor in mathematics just for good measure).

² We use the term “Theophostic[®]-based” to refer to therapies/ministries that are built around a core of Theophostic[®] principles and techniques, but that are not exactly identical to Theophostic[®] Prayer Ministry as taught by Dr. Ed Smith. Our own therapy/ministry prior to 2007 would be a good example – it was built around a core of Theophostic[®] principles and techniques, but it sometimes also included material that is not a part of what we understand Dr. Smith to define as Theophostic[®] Prayer Ministry (such as “Immanuel Interventions,” our material on dealing with curses, spiritual strongholds, generational problems, and suicide-related phenomena, and our material on journaling, spiritual disciplines, capacity, community, and medical psychiatry).

³ Clients still occasionally experience visible manifestations of demonic opposition, but this has become less and less common over the past twenty-five years. For our thoughts regarding this progressive decline with respect to visible manifestations see: “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,” available as free download from www.immanuelapproach.com).

name⁴. At other times it is much more subtle, as described in our notes about exposure and binding prayer.

An analogy that is making more and more sense to me is that of wounds and infection. Bacteria are very common, and we assume that any wound occurring outside of a sterilized operating room will be infected. In normal everyday life, we don't even take the trouble to examine the wound with a microscope or to do a culture to test for bacteria. We assume the wound is infected and routinely treat with antibiotics. And this assumption that wounds are usually infected is verified whenever they *are* cultured or examined microscopically. Furthermore, empirical research shows that even minor cuts and abrasions heal more quickly when treated with antibiotic cream, which further supports the assumption that even minor wounds are usually infected. (NOTE: Most of these wounds are not obviously infected – they are not swollen, hot, red, or oozing pus. Most of the time the infection is low grade and not apparent to the naked eye. Nevertheless, this “invisible” low grade infection slows the healing process.)

Similarly, my experience has been that most emotional and spiritual wounds have some degree of demonic “infection” trying to oppose the healing process. I now routinely use the simple prayers described in the essays about “binding” prayer and my usual opening prayer, and have found this to significantly facilitate the healing process for many of my patients.

Discovering and proving our profound authority in Christ with respect to dealing with spiritual opposition has been like rediscovering part of the gospel for me. I had known this *cognitively* for many years, but it had not been *experientially* real. Thankfully this has changed. For example, several weeks prior to writing the first draft of this essay I had a client who was having terrible panic attacks waking him in the middle of the night. My intuitive discernment told me there was a demonic component, and then he called late one evening in the middle of a hyperventilating, heart-pounding panic attack that had been going continuously for 30 minutes. We talked for a minute and then I prayed four minutes of binding prayer (he was watching the clock). Short summary: "I command that all spirits of fear and panic be bound in the name of Jesus Christ. If you choose to defy this command, you defy the authority of Jesus and will go and deal with Him directly."⁵ After my four-minute prayer I asked how he was doing. "This is amazing. It's gone. I feel fine." I had given him a copy of our binding prayer and encouraged him to try it himself. He tried it the next time he felt the panic thoughts starting to attack him. It worked. He was then able to "hold them at bay" with a simple rebuke in prayer until his next appointment. He experienced observable physical manifestations of demonic opposition when we addressed his panic during his next EMDR/Theophostic-based session, and these manifestations resolved when the Lord addressed the underlying wounds and lies. Again, this has been like rediscovering part of Jesus' good news: "I have come to set the captives free."

Lehman materials discussing demonic phenomena: Unless otherwise indicated, the essays mentioned below are posted in the “Kclehman Website Archives” section of the Resources page of www.immanuelapproach.com.

General discussion:

⁴ See “EMDR, Traumatic Memories, and Physical Phenomena” (in the “Kclehman.com Website Archives” section of the Resources page of www.immanuelapproach.com) for additional comments.

⁵ The complete version of my “four minute prayer” was essentially the sample prayer presented in our essay “Binding’ the Enemy: Prayers and Commands to Alleviate Demonic Harassment and/or Oppression.”

“General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids.”

“Understanding and Dealing with Demonic Oppression and Interference: Common Concerns.”

Specific ministry aids related to demonic phenomena:

“Dealing With Demonic Interference/Opposition During the Session, Prayers and Commands to Neutralize Demonic Interference.”

“‘Binding’ the Enemy: Prayers and Commands to Alleviate Demonic Harassment and/or Oppression.”

“Opening Prayers and Commands: Prayer for the Facilitator, Dealing with the Demonic, and General Introductory Prayer” Posted at the bottom of the “Training/Practice Exercises for Groups and Beginners” section of Resources page of www.immanuelapproach.com .

“Closing Prayer and Commands” Posted at the bottom of the “Training/Practice Exercises for Groups and Beginners” section of Resources page of www.immanuelapproach.com .

“Distinguishing Between Demonic Spirits and Internal Parts.” Posted in the Special Subjects/Advanced Topics section of the Resources page of www.immanuelapproach.com .

The Immanuel Approach: For Emotional Healing and for Life (also known as the big lion book): includes quite a bit of material on how demonic spirits try to hinder the Immanuel Approach, how to recognize their interference, and how to deal with it. Use the index.

Physical manifestations/phenomena, emotional healing, demonic opposition, and charismatic renewal: As most of you are probably aware, there is a lot of disagreement within the church regarding charismatic renewal and especially the physical manifestations/phenomena often associated with it. Charlotte and I welcome charismatic renewal, we believe in the present day release of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and we have been blessed by various renewal ministries.⁶ However, we want to be discerning about counterfeit and deception from the enemy. We also want to dialogue and discern with our brothers and sisters in the wider church. In the essays below, we have tried to describe some of our own experiences and observations with respect to physical manifestations/phenomena. We are hoping that these descriptions will provide “data” that will be helpful as we all continue to dialogue and discern regarding charismatic renewal and charismatic phenomena. We are hoping these essays will provide useful information for others who are trying to learn and understand more about the connections between our physical, emotional, and spiritual components. We are also hoping these essays will provide practical insights regarding how to address physical phenomena as they occur in the context of Immanuel Approach work. All of the essays mentioned below are posted in the “Kclehman Website Archives” section of the Resources page of www.immanuelapproach.com.

“Emotional Healing, Spiritual Opposition, and Physical Manifestations.”

⁶ We realize that there is sometimes a lot of counterfeit, confusion, and dysfunction associated with charismatic ministries and charismatic phenomena, but we believe that there is actually a baby in the bathwater.

“Physical Behavior, Phenomena, and Manifestations: ‘Pressure Leaks’ that can Hinder Prayer for Emotional Healing.”

“Deceiving Spirits and Counterfeit Manifestations: How Wounds, Lies, Internal Parts, Repression, and Denial Can Give Them a Place.”

“EMDR, Emotional Healing, and Physical Phenomena/Manifestations.”

“Physical Behavior, Phenomena, and Manifestations: Summary, Practical Applications, and Sample Prayers.”

Note regarding balance with respect to focus on demonic phenomena: Our primary goal is to help people perceive and connect with the tangible, living, interactive, personal presence of the Lord, and to grow in intimacy with the Lord. An important part of helping people perceive the Lord, establish and interactive connection with the Lord, and increase in intimacy with the Lord is resolving the psychological trauma that often hinders all of these goals. And this healing work often involves exposing and removing demonic infection/opposition. This is quite different than being interested in evil for its own sake.