



Internal Dissociated Parts Presenting as Jesus¹

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Internal dissociated parts “volunteering” to present as Jesus: In the basic training manual, *Beyond Tolerable Recovery*, Dr. Smith discusses the phenomena of a person’s own mind responding with thoughts/answers when the facilitator asks Jesus to come with truth.² Dr. Smith also discusses the phenomena of demonic spirits trying to interfere with the Theophostic process by pretending to be Jesus.³ In advanced training seminars, Dr. Smith has taught about how internal dissociated parts can be intentionally programmed to pretend to be Jesus.⁴ As Dr. Smith discusses in the footnoted references, the first two are relatively easy to detect and to deal with, and the third is seen only in Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA) survivors and is an advanced training subject.

However, we have found that it is common for internal dissociated parts to present themselves as Jesus even in situations where they have not been specifically programmed to do so. I refer to these as “volunteer” internal parts since they have not been programmed, but rather learned on their own that they could “help” the person by presenting themselves as Jesus, and they “volunteer” to do this. In my experience with emotional healing ministry, this is the most important source of thoughts, images, etc that are initially *erroneously* perceived as coming from Jesus but then eventually discovered to be coming from somewhere else.

Some times there are simply internal parts that have learned to provide “internal” cognitive therapy. They have been paying attention in Sunday school and many other settings, and know many helpful truths. When the person gets triggered, these internal parts bring forward helpful truths to challenge the lies and negative emotions in much the same way a cognitive therapist or pastoral counselor might. This internal cognitive therapy only provides temporary relief, since the lies and negative emotions are being challenged in the present as opposed to the lies being replaced where they are rooted in the underlying memories, but it is better than nothing. In some people these internal cognitive therapy parts have been working for many years, and jump into action automatically when the person is triggered. When distorted thoughts and negative emotions are

¹ As discussed at length in other essays, the Lord presents to people in many different ways. The person may just notice true thoughts coming into her mind that replace the distorted thoughts associated with the traumatic memory she is working on. She may have an internal mental perception of a “voice” speaking to her. She may perceive an internal mental image of Jesus, and this image interacts with her in ways that are powerfully healing. She may just sense a comforting presence that encourages her, and she somehow knows that this presence is hearing and understanding her. Similarly, when internal parts present themselves as Jesus this can occur in many different ways, from helpful thoughts coming into the person’s mind to dramatic images.

² Smith, Ed. *Beyond Tolerable Recovery*. (Alathia Publishing: Campbellsville, KY) 2000. Pages 69, 97, 147-8.

³ Smith, Ed. *Beyond Tolerable Recovery*. (Alathia Publishing: Campbellsville, KY) 2000. Pages 309-310, and Smith, Ed and Panozzo, Andrea. *Theophostic Ministry Trouble Shooter’s Quick Reference Guide*. (New Creation Publishing: Campbellsville, KY) 2002, page 58.

⁴ Smith, Ed. Verbal comments, Theophostic Advance Training Seminars 1998, 1999, 2000.

stirred up in an emotional healing ministry session these parts naturally come forward with helpful truth, just as they have always done. They are usually not trying to impersonate Jesus in any deceptive or malicious way, but are simply doing the job they have always done. Unfortunately, in the context of the Immanuel approach and/or Theophostic-based emotional healing, in sessions where the facilitator and client are inviting Jesus to come with truth in response to distorted interpretations, the person will usually perceive the helpful cognitive therapy truth as coming from Jesus. Furthermore, the person will often experience some relief, just as when these internal cognitive therapy parts have brought their helpful truths forward in the past.

In other situations we have found internal parts that present themselves as Jesus for very clear reasons. For example, a number of people have had deep disappointment wounds, including specific memories where their care providers “didn’t come,” “didn’t talk to me,” “didn’t give me what I needed.” In these people, the internal parts presenting as Jesus have told me very clearly, “It’s not safe to wait for Jesus because He won’t come, and _____ (*the adult person*) will get hurt again,” or “I know *Jesus* won’t talk, I know *He* won’t say anything – so I have to do it.” As mentioned above, we have also encountered internal parts that have learned to present themselves as Jesus in order to take control of the session. For example, sometimes the internal parts are afraid to go to certain memories and/or issues, and will present as Jesus in order to lead us in some other direction.

Internal parts can also “escape” from especially painful emotional healing work by producing counterfeit healing in order to end the session prematurely. We have seen internal parts that are able to produce very convincing counterfeit healing. For example, if the internal part(s) produce dramatic imagery, offer encouraging scripture and comforting cognitive therapy truth, and then suddenly cause dissociative disconnection so that the person no longer feels the painful emotions, the person will experience sudden and dramatic relief that can easily be mistaken for healing. In these situations the person receiving ministry might report something like: “I see a golden light.... Jesus says that He loves me, that He will never leave me nor forsake me, and that it will be okay now,” and then comment “I feel a lot better. I think this would be a good place to end the session.” Often the counterfeit is not detected until we notice the absence of lasting fruit and/or we notice that in later sessions the person comes back to the exact same place *and finds the exact same toxic traumatic content that had supposedly already been resolved.*

One reason I think that internal parts volunteering to present themselves as Jesus are so important is that they are more difficult to spot than the other Jesus counterfeits. In my experience, the person’s own adult mind is much easier to spot. The person receiving ministry will demonstrate minimal observable improvement, and when questioned will say things like “It just feels like my usual thoughts,” “It feels like I’m just remembering what I learned in Sunday school,” or “I feel like I’m just coming up with my own answers, like I always have.” When internal parts present themselves as Jesus, the internal subjective experience is much easier to confuse with the real Jesus because it feels like the truth (thought/image/etc.) is “coming from somewhere else” that’s “not me.” And this internal subjective experience will be more intense and “convincing” for people with internal parts that are more clearly separate and/or for people who do not yet know they have internal dissociated parts. The person receiving ministry will also usually experience more subjective relief when internal parts come with truth and/or counterfeit

healing than when he simply hears truth from his own adult mind.⁵

In my experience, demonic spirits impersonating Jesus are also much easier to spot than internal parts. Demonic spirits just don't do a very good job of being Jesus. Their "truth" is usually contaminated with at least some piece of un-biblical content or emphasis, and their agenda to shut down the healing process and/or lead away from important targets is often easy to spot. An internal dissociated part, on the other hand, may be part of the mind of a Christian who has served the Lord for many years. An internal part bringing truth may have true compassion, and may have many years of experience in bringing forward true Biblical insights as a way of caring for the person when they get triggered. Demonic spirits can produce some temporary subjective relief in association with counterfeit healing,⁶ but in my experience internal parts are much more convincing with respect to both subjective relief and counterfeit healing.

Furthermore, the internal part may be the source of thoughts, images, sensations, etc. that the person has taken to be Jesus in the past. Not only will the person "recognize" the internal part as Jesus, but she will also often be very invested in holding onto the belief that this image/voice/source of thoughts, etc. is indeed Jesus. There is the simple pride factor, resisting the humbling experience of discovering that she is not as spiritually mature as she had thought, and that many of her "words from Jesus" have actually come from parts of her own mind. There is the confusion and fear factor: "If this isn't Jesus, then how do I know what to believe?," "If I have been deceived in the past, how will I know I'm not being deceived in the future?," or "Oh no, does this mean that everything I have heard from Jesus has been fake?" There is the control factor – I have worked with a number of internal parts that learned they could easily take control of the emotional healing process if they presented as Jesus. And I have also worked with people who had "Jesus" internal parts that had told and/or promised them things they didn't want to let go of. Each of these factors/considerations makes it more difficult for the person receiving ministry to recognize and/or acknowledge that internal parts are presenting as Jesus.

Watch for "fruit" that does not last: As briefly mentioned above, an important way to detect internal parts (or any other source) presenting as Jesus is that the "fruit" will not last. This can sometimes be revealed quickly, right in the session, by returning to the original trigger and trying to stir it up again. If the underlying issue has truly been resolved by Jesus, trying to stir it up won't hurt anything, and will simply confirm the healing. If "stirring" results in the issues and negative emotions being reactivated, then I immediately suspect some source other than Jesus. Note that when "testing" it is important to return to the exact same target. For example, a single traumatic memory may have several unresolved issues associated with it, and it is possible to work through some of these issues in a given emotional healing session while leaving others unresolved. You can mistakenly conclude that the healing was not genuine if you return to the same memory but focus on one of the issues that has not yet been addressed.

⁵ The person receiving ministry will experience especially dramatic relief if the internal parts involved decide to disconnect the painful memories and/or issues that are being addressed. The good news is that both the facilitator and the person receiving ministry can usually eventually learn to tell the difference between the true peace and calm of genuine healing and the "numb," "disconnected," "buried but not gone" feeling of disconnection counterfeit healing.

⁶ Our perception is that demonic spirits can choose to reduce the intensity of their oppression and harassment (when there is a strategic reason to do so), and when they do this the person experiences temporary subjective relief.

Sometimes “testing the fruit” *during the session* will not expose a counterfeit Jesus. For example, if the underlying issues have been completely disconnected, and the person’s defenses are unified in hiding and guarding them, even the most vigorous stirring will not bring them back to the surface. The most sensitive way to detect internal parts (or any other source) presenting as Jesus is to *follow up carefully over time* regarding fruit in the person’s life. There should be tangible, lasting fruit consistent with healing, and it should steadily accumulate over time as the person continues to do healing work. I have occasionally missed demonic spirits and/or internal parts presenting as Jesus at the time of the session, but this has always become apparent over time. Internal parts and/or demonic spirits may counterfeit a healing moment so well that I miss it during the session, but this fallen world is always faithful to provide triggers that will bring the unresolved issues back into the light. If the person has truly experienced the Lord’s living presence in a traumatic memory, and has truly cooperated with His healing work regarding the issues being addressed, then you should be able to observe some kind of lasting fruit.

Watch for guardian lies that don’t move: Yet another way to detect internal parts (or any other source) presenting as Jesus is that guardian lies don’t move. It is usually easy to spot this if you are aware of the possibility. If Jesus speaks to a guardian lie, when you go back to where the process stopped the guardian lie will truly be resolved. If we return to the stuck point and the process doesn’t move forward, one of the first things I now do is to check if the guardian lie is truly resolved. There may be other guardian lies and/or other clutter issues still blocking the process, but one of the *first* things I do is check if the *specific guardian lie just addressed* is truly resolved. If Jesus appears to address a guardian lie, but then the specific guardian lie just addressed does not resolve, I suspect some source other than Jesus. As with “testing the fruit,” careful observation over time is especially sensitive. I may not immediately recognize that “truth” that appears to address a guardian lie is from some source other than Jesus,⁷ but if I am paying attention I will notice that we come back to exactly the same place and find exactly the same guardian lie blocking the process in exactly the same way. If the person has truly been working with the Lord’s living presence in the traumatic memories, and has truly engaged with the Lord regarding the guardian lie, *then something should be different*. For example, there are sometimes reasons why the guardian does not resolve fully when first addressed, *but it should at least feel less true*. The person will also usually be able to perceive the Lord’s presence with them at the place where they carry the guardian lie, and should be able to engage with Him regarding why some aspect of the guardian lie still lingers.

Note also that testing guardian lies is an especially valuable way to detect counterfeit Jesus’ because it is something that the facilitator can observe for him or herself. As mentioned above, “testing the fruit” in the ministry session by trying to stir up the target lies and/or issues has its limitations. As also mentioned, observing for lasting fruit over time is more sensitive, but the facilitator usually does not have the opportunity to directly observe the target issues in the life of the person receiving ministry. The facilitator therefore usually needs to rely on the report of the person receiving ministry. Some people have very good insight and are able to accurately observe their lives for changes, but this is not always the case. Guardian lies, on the other hand,

⁷ When the process is simple, and the person is moving steadily down one pathway, it is very easy to tell immediately that the guardian lie has not moved: movement down the one, simple pathway stops, a guardian lie is identified, Jesus appears to speak to the guardian lie, but the guardian lie still feels true and the process does not move forward. However, sometimes the process can be somewhat chaotic. Several different parts are involved, the person is bouncing around to different memories, and a number of different clutter items have been identified, including several guardian lies. In these situations it’s much easier to initially miss that a guardian lie hasn’t been truly resolved.

allow the facilitator to observe directly regarding whether they have truly been resolved or whether they eventually come back.

Recognize the counterfeit by knowing the genuine: Most of us have heard the story about how the government trains federal agents to recognize counterfeit money: they don't spend time studying the many ways counterfeit money can look, but rather spend hours and hours looking at genuine money. The idea is that they will embed every detail of genuine money so deeply in their unconscious implicit memories that they will have an immediate, intuitive, "something just isn't right" response when they encounter counterfeit money. And once they have been warned by their initial implicit memory intuitive reaction, they can confirm their intuitive reaction by systematically analyzing the possibly fake bills with the cognitive information in their explicit memory systems. A similar approach with respect to emotional healing ministry has increasingly become my primary method of detecting internal parts (or any other source) presenting as Jesus. As I have become increasingly familiar with God's character and heart, with the ways God works, with the kinds of things God says and does, and with the results that usually follow from certain interventions on his part I usually notice that "something just doesn't feel right" when a recipient is interacting with a supposed God presence that is counterfeit or contaminated.

This approach is obviously less valuable for those who don't feel confident regarding their ability to recognize the genuine (for example, beginners who have not yet had much experience with the Lord's living presence, or people who still have many unresolved wounds that get transferred onto the Lord and impair their perception of His heart and character). However, I strongly encourage focusing on this approach as one of the primary components of your long term plan.⁸ Over time, spending time with Immanuel in your personal devotions, experiencing the Lord's healing presence in your own healing sessions, watching the Lord work in sessions you facilitate, watching the Lord work in other sessions,⁹ and specifically resolving traumatic content that gets transferred onto the Lord will result in an increasingly strong and accurate "knowing" with respect to *who God is* and *how he works*. The guidelines discussed above with respect to watching for guardian lies that don't move and "testing the fruit" over time are a good place to start, but they are blunt instruments compared to a growing ability to recognize the counterfeit by knowing the genuine.

"Something just doesn't feel right" with respect to character and heart: A counterfeit Jesus will sometimes say and do things that are not consistent with the Lord's character and heart, and this happens with increasing frequency in situations that are especially complicated and intense.¹⁰ In these situations my first response is an intuitive "something just doesn't feel right," and then when I recognize the warning and pause to analyze the details I can identify

⁸ The three primary components of your long term plan should be: 1) watching for anything that contradicts scripture, 2) watching for observable fruit, and 3) this component of developing an intuitive feel for the genuine.

⁹ One application for our live session DVDs is to provide an easily accessible "this is what it looks like/feels like when a person is perceiving the Lord's presence and working with Him." If you know effective Immanuel approach facilitators who will let you observe their work, this is another good way to grow in your knowledge of who the Lord is and how He works.

¹⁰ When your client is working with the real Jesus, He will always remain perfectly compassionate, patient, balanced, relational, etc *no matter how difficult things get*. However, if she is working with a counterfeit Jesus the underlying source (demonic spirit, internal part, etc) will have increasing difficulty as the situation becomes increasing complex and intense.

specific things the supposed Jesus is saying and/or doing that are not consistent with what I know to be true about the Lord's character and heart. For example, in the thousands of hours of emotional healing sessions I have facilitated I have never seen the Lord display confusion, frustration, fatigue, helplessness, self pity, discouragement, impatience, harshness, or sarcasm. He just doesn't do these. So if I am facilitating a session and the person describes "Jesus" as making comments that contain even a hint of harshness and sarcasm, I immediately feel my "something's not right" warning, and my suspicion of counterfeit is confirmed when a few moments of analysis identifies these attitudes that *never* come from a genuine Jesus. ****This has become the way in which I most often discern that other sources are presenting as Jesus.****

"Something just doesn't feel right" with respect to fruit: As I have experienced the Lord's Immanuel presence in my own healing sessions, as I have observed Him working with my clients in sessions where I am facilitating, and as I have observed Him working in sessions where others are facilitating I have not only gotten a feel for who Jesus is and for how He works, but also *for the kind of fruit one would expect in a given situation*. When other sources (such as internal parts) are presenting as Jesus, the healing effects from the things they say and do are less than what I see when the real Jesus comes with the same interventions. In these situations my first response is an intuitive "something just doesn't feel right," and then when I recognize the warning and pause to analyze the details I can identify specific ways in which the "fruit" from the Lord's supposed presence and interventions is less than expected.

For example, in some situations there is still a lot of stuff in the way of complete healing for the key issue being addressed, but the person is still able to perceive the Lord's presence and He offers guidance and encouragement even as He works with her to remove the blockages that prevent complete resolution. In these situations the person will experience moderate benefit from the Lord's presence and encouragement even though the primary issue has not yet been resolved, and I have gotten a feel for the kinds of moderate benefits to be expected in these scenarios. In other situations it seems like all the pieces are in place for complete resolution of the key target issue, *and the Lord says and does things consistent with "Now it's time to wrap this one up."* In these situations the person will experience dramatic lasting benefit, and I have gotten a feel for the kinds of dramatic benefits to be expected in these scenarios. In contrast, when internal parts present as Jesus they often try to compensate for their lack of true power by producing statements of truth, visual imagery, and other interventions that are especially dramatic. So if the person reports an apparent Jesus who is saying and doing things consistent with "Now it's time to wrap this one up," but the observed benefits are mediocre, I suspect some other source presenting as Jesus.

Watching for this "something just doesn't feel right" with respect to healing efficacy is a much more complex, nuanced version of "test the fruit." As discussed in more detail below, sometimes things can be complicated, and this more nuanced approach is an important resource for "testing the fruit" in complicated situations.

Again, when you are familiar with the Lord's authentic presence and work you will notice that "something just doesn't feel right" when some other source is presenting as Jesus, and then analysis will usually¹¹ identify specifics that confirm your suspicion.

¹¹ Occasionally your intuitive warning system will correctly identify a counterfeit Jesus even though you can't identify confirmation with your cognitive analysis. If you continue to feel the "something just

Interventions for internal parts presenting as Jesus: Once I suspect that there may be internal parts presenting themselves as Jesus, I usually take the simple and direct step of explaining this phenomena, explaining why I think it might be happening in this particular situation, and then asking to speak with any internal parts that might be involved. For example: “Sometimes parts of a person’s mind learn how to help him by speaking truth when he is upset. Sometimes parts try to help or protect the person by speaking for Jesus, or even by pretending to be Jesus. I think this might be happening here because it seems like Jesus has been speaking and working but nothing appears to be changing. Can I please talk to any parts that have been speaking for Jesus (or ‘presenting as Jesus,’ if more appropriate)?” I use the direct eye contact technique while doing this, or not, depending on what has been most helpful in the past with this particular person.¹²

I have been pleasantly surprised by the results.¹³ In almost every situation, the internal parts involved come forward and acknowledge what they have been doing. If they have just been “helping” out of habit, the problem can usually be solved by simply asking them if they would be willing to stand to the side and let Jesus fix the problem completely and permanently. Sometimes these parts will forget, and jump back into old behaviors, but they will respond quickly to a simple, gentle reminder. If their behavior is entrenched because of guardian lies, then the guardian lies (and usually anchoring memories) will have to be addressed before they are willing/able to let go of the old behavior.

Occasionally I will encounter a person who displays clear, strong, consistent clues of internal parts presenting as Jesus, but I get no cooperation, or even acknowledgment in response to my usual approach. In these situations I assume that there is a very good reason the internal parts involved aren’t cooperating. This is the part of the process where I keep asking the Lord for guidance, and apply everything I know about emotional healing and working with internal dissociated parts.

One person I worked with provides good examples of many of the above phenomena/principles. He had pursued healing continuously for more than 20 years, and in every Christian related context I know of – prophetic ministry, charismatic healing meetings, prayer for emotional healing of several varieties, Christian psychotherapy of several varieties, and Theophostic ministry. To everybody’s confusion and frustration, he seemed to experience no lasting results with respect to his emotional issues. We experienced the same lack of results, confusion, and frustration in our emotional healing work. Eventually I began to notice that even though he reported perceiving the Lord’s presence, and that he perceived Jesus to be working and speaking

doesn’t feel right” intuitive warning you can try the interventions described below, but with extra humility and openly acknowledging “I can’t put my finger on the specific problem, but I keep having the feeling that something’s just not right.”

¹² If you suspect that one of your clients may have internal parts that are presenting as Jesus, another possibility would be to have them read this essay and then discuss it. You might even agree that you will be watching for this during the session, that you will point out clues when you notice them, and that you will then try direct interactions with the internal parts as suggested below.

¹³ When I am peaceful and calm, not frustrated or judgmental or triggered in any way, I am amazed at how willing internal parts are to come forward and talk to me about what they are doing. If I am triggered in some way, and especially if I am frustrated and/or judgmental, then internal parts tend to be guarded and uncooperative (often “stonewalling” me by not even acknowledging that they are there).

in various ways, *nothing really changed*. I didn't have any way in which to directly observe regarding whether there was fruit outside the ministry sessions, but I could observe that guardian lies seemed to come back. The *exact same* guardian lies we had addressed in earlier sessions would come back again several weeks or several months later. There was no evidence of SRA, so I didn't suspect internal parts programmed to impersonate Jesus, and from careful evaluation I was also convinced that demonic spirits were not impersonating Jesus. When I finally stumbled onto the phenomenon of non-programmed, "volunteer" internal parts presenting as Jesus I immediately thought of this person. When I used the direct eye contact technique and asked directly about this possibility his internal parts openly acknowledged that they had been presenting as Jesus, and they were entrenched in this position due to guardian lies deeply anchored in "He won't come" memories. He had internal dissociated parts that had been presenting as Jesus and speaking for Jesus in every setting, including Theophostic ministry, *and even most of his personal prayer times*. In every one of these ministry/therapy settings the people involved had thought this person was working with Jesus on a regular basis, when in fact the "Jesus" he had been perceiving and working with had always been internal parts. This had been completely blocking the emotional healing process, especially because "Jesus" would appear to address guardian lies but then these exact same guardian lies would sneak back and begin to hinder the process again.

If a person has had parts presenting as Jesus in the past I will be especially aware of this possibility as I continue to work with him. Even when I'm not seeing clear, specific clues, if I notice that the person is having trouble moving steadily forward in the emotional healing process, and/or if there is uncertainty about whether he is experiencing lasting changes in his life between sessions,¹⁴ I will check the possibility that internal parts are presenting as Jesus.

Caveats regarding "If it doesn't work then it must not be Jesus": When I wrote the first version of this essay (almost seven years ago) I was somewhat simplistic with respect to "If you don't get perfect, complete, permanent results then it must not be Jesus." For example, in the first version of the essay I made the following statements:

"One way to detect internal parts (or any other source) presenting as Jesus is to check whether the lies addressed feel *completely* false, whether the replacing truths feel *completely* true, and whether there is *complete* peace and calm with respect to the lies and/or other issues that have just been addressed. If Jesus speaks, the work will be complete. If the person reports that things are "better," that the lies feel "less true," and that the truths feel "sort of" or "mostly" true, then I immediately suspect some source other than Jesus."

"The exact same lie and/or issue will never come back if Jesus has dealt with it."

"...Jesus doesn't come with truth when it's not yet time, or the pieces aren't all in place, etc. If "truth" comes, but it's not completely effective for some reason, I immediately suspect some source other than Jesus."

Since writing these comments I have come to accept that reality is more complex. My own healing has enabled me to let go of trying to oversimplify things in order to feel more in control,

¹⁴ If the person is moving forward steadily and demonstrating lasting fruit then I will not invest much time in testing and/or asking regarding parts speaking for Jesus.

and this has made it easier for me to make more accurate observations during the many thousands of hours of emotional healing I have facilitated since 2003. The “rules” described in my earlier comments are nice, tidy, and helped me feel more in control, but unfortunately they are incorrect. Let’s start with: “...Jesus doesn’t come with truth when it’s not yet time [for complete healing], or the pieces aren’t all in place [for final resolution], etc.” As many of you have also observed, people routinely perceive the Lord’s presence long before the key issue being addressed is ready for complete resolution – they routinely report that Jesus comes with various kinds of truth to guide and encourage them in the process of preparing the way. In fact, in the Immanuel approach we try to help the person perceive the Lord’s presence and connect with Him as early as possible, and we coach the person to interact with the Lord constantly throughout the process. In fact, my clients have reported Jesus showing up in places where they were still very entrenched in dysfunctional defenses, and saying things like: “I’m glad to be with you whether or not you decide to ‘cooperate.’ I’m sad that you’re still in so much pain, and I would like for you to get healed, but I’m glad to sit here with you – even if you don’t decide to cooperate for *years*.”

I think there is a piece of truth in my 2003 version comments, and it pertains to internal parts who will often try to shortcut the process by skipping difficult subsidiary issues and jumping prematurely to “Okay, it’s time to wrap this up.” As described above, the way the apparent Jesus presents in these situations and the truths He speaks would be appropriate for all the pieces being in place and complete resolution; but the counterfeit Jesus’ presentation and comments will seem premature and the results will be disappointing. The accurate part of my earlier comments is that the true Jesus will not come with *premature “it’s time to wrap this up” presentations and statements*.

Now let’s talk about “The exact same lie and/or issue will never come back if Jesus has dealt with it.” There is some truth to this statement. We have certainly seen lies/issues that were anchored in one or several key memories, and when the Lord helped the person work through the unresolved content in these memories the lies/issues were completely and permanently resolved. Years later the person reports that the memories still feel resolved, that the lies continue to feel untrue, and that the symptoms previously associated with the lies and other issues anchored in the memories have never returned. However, things are often more complicated. For example, things are more complicated when a number of very similar traumatic memories carry very similar lies and/or other issues. When the person works with Jesus to resolve the lies and issues in one (or even several) of these memories, *but does not resolve them all*, then a week later it will appear as if these lies and issues have returned when some trigger activates the similar content in the memories that have not yet been resolved.¹⁵

If you are aware of this phenomena you can often clarify the situation by going back to the exact same memory and checking the exact same issues. If the person had indeed been working with Jesus she will be pleasantly surprised to discover that she still perceives His presence in the specific memory, that the specific issues they had worked through are still resolved, and that the memory still feels peaceful and calm. At this point she will often be able to recognize that the issues that have gotten stirred up are not *exactly* the same as the ones that she had worked through with the Lord, and that they are anchored in memories that are similar but not *exactly* the same. It is nice when things work out like this (and they often do), but unfortunately this

¹⁵ This pattern can even occur within a single traumatic memory if it is severe, complex, and carries multiple similar issues.

phenomena can sometimes be very subtle, very difficult to recognize, and very difficult to clarify. In these very subtle very difficult scenarios the bottom line is that the person will perceive that the same issues have returned, even though she did indeed perceive the Lord's presence and even though she did indeed work with Him to accomplish real healing.

Things get even more complicated when you have a huge network of similar memories that collectively anchor a set of very similar lies and issues. Dr. Smith calls these "thematic" lies and/or issues,¹⁶ and my own experience provides a good example. I spent much of my childhood feeling anxious and discouraged. I felt chronically anxious and discouraged regarding the environmental destruction that I saw, heard about, and read about day after day after day. I felt chronically anxious and discouraged about the racial strife that I experienced, heard about, and read about day after day after day. I was chronically frightened and discouraged by the haunting belief that we would all die in a nuclear holocaust. I was chronically frightened and discouraged by the news from Viet Nam that I heard about, read about, and saw on television day after day after day. I felt chronically anxious and discouraged regarding the pervasive political corruption that I heard about and read about day after day after day. I was chronically frightened and discouraged by the never ending reports of starving children – starving children in India, starving children in Ethiopia, starving children in Cambodia, starving children in Somalia...etc. And I felt chronically anxious and discouraged regarding the international oppression and injustice that seemed to fill the world. As a result of all this, I ended up with a massive network of thousands of similar traumatic¹⁷ memories, all carrying similar lies and issues related to feeling anxious and discouraged. Furthermore, these memories, lies, and other issues are woven together with bitterness, judgement, vows, and a variety of other reactive sins and self-protective defenses.

So, what has it looked like to work on this massive network of similar traumatic memories that carry a tangle of similar issues and lies, and that are woven together with a complex tangle of deeply embedded reactive sins and self-protective defenses? Well, it certainly has *not* been simple and straight-forward. On one hand, something good almost always happens when I work on issues and lies related to my thematic anxiety and discouragement. I usually perceive the Lord's presence, I usually experience some kind of progress with respect to processing traumatic memories and their associated lies and issues, and something usually changes with respect to my reactivity to the specific triggers I was focusing on at the beginning of the session. But my experience with thematic anxiety and discouragement is definitely *not* consistent with "The exact same lie and/or issue will never come back if Jesus has dealt with it." If I watch carefully, especially over time, I can see steadily growing changes. Triggers must be more intense in order to activate the familiar anxiety and discouragement, the reaction isn't as big, I am more able to recognize and acknowledge that I am triggered, I am able to get my relational circuits back on more quickly, and I can more easily make productive choices (such as either working on healing or shutting the material back down), and I will occasionally notice that an old, familiar trigger no longer bothers me. But even after many sessions and steady progress that even my wife can see, parts of the thematic memory network that have not yet been fully resolved still get triggered on

¹⁶ For Dr. Smith's discussion of thematic lies, see Smith, Ed. *Theophostic® Prayer Ministry: Basic Seminar Manual*, (Campbellsville, KY: New Creation Publishing), 2005, pages 104-106.

¹⁷ These daily experiences of feeling anxious and discouraged were not major traumas, such as family members dying in an automobile accident, but they were still traumatic by way of being painful experiences that I was unable to successfully process. For additional discussion of this definition of psychological trauma, see "Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and The God Who is With Us, Part II," available as free download from www.kclehman.com

a regular basis and familiar packages of anxiety and discouragement lies and issues still come forward.

And things get even more complicated than thematic issues/lies when ritual abuse perpetrators systematically program many different dissociated parts to carry the same lies and/or issues. This very malicious, very complex trauma produces another clinical scenario that is definitely *not* consistent with “The exact same lie and/or issue will never come back if Jesus has dealt with it.”¹⁸

Now let's talk about “If Jesus speaks, the work will be complete. If the person reports that things are ‘better,’ that the lies feel ‘less true,’ and that the truths feel ‘sort of’ or ‘mostly’ true, then I immediately suspect some source other than Jesus.” As with the previous point, there is some truth to these statements. We have certainly seen lies/issues that were anchored in one or several key memories, and when the Lord helped the person work through the unresolved content in these memories the lies/issues were *completely* resolved. The lies that had been addressed felt *completely* false, the new truths felt *completely* true, and there was *complete* peace and calm with respect to the lies and/or other issues that had been resolved. However, things are often more complicated. To start with, the three clinical scenarios just discussed with respect to “The exact same lie and/or issue will never come back if Jesus has dealt with it” can also cause the person to feel *only partial resolution* in a given emotional healing session. For example, when I work on my thematic anxiety and discouragement I usually perceive forward movement of some kind, and sometimes I get to the end of a session and feel like a very specific piece of a very specific memory has been resolved, but the larger thematic anxiety and discouragement lies and issues have never yet felt *completely* resolved.

Another common cause of a person feeling that the issues and/or lies being addressed have not been *completely* resolved is the person's own defensive barriers blocking the full efficacy of the Lord's presence, statements, and interventions. For example, if various forms of dissociative disconnection are still in place the person may be able to perceive the Lord's presence, but *not* be able to fully connect with Him or to receive the full benefit of His presence and interventions. The intended purpose of these disconnection defenses is to keep the person from being overwhelmed by preventing her from feeling the painful emotions carried in the memories; but, unfortunately, these defenses that prevent her from feeling also get in the way of receiving the benefits of the Lord's presence. Most of the benefits of perceiving the Lord's presence come with being able to *feel* His presence – being able to *feel* His friendship, being able to *feel* His compassion, being able to *feel* His forgiveness, being able to *feel* His encouragement, being able to *feel* His attunement, being able to *feel* the authority of the truth He speaks, etc – and the person is not able to receive these benefits until the disconnection defenses are dismantled.

One of my recent client sessions provides an example. In the memory we were working with a big part of the client's pain was feeling abandoned and alone in the traumatic experience. I coached her to make the Immanuel approach invitation and request,¹⁹ and when she did this she

¹⁸ Fortunately this is uncommon, and most lay ministers doing emotional healing work will not need to deal with it.

¹⁹ As discussed at length in “Brain Science, Emotional Healing, and The God Who is With Us Part V: The Immanuel Approach Revisited,” the Immanuel approach invitation is to make a *heart* invitation for the Lord to be *with you in* the traumatic memory, and the Immanuel approach request is to *explicitly* ask the Lord to help you perceive His presence.

was immediately able to perceive Jesus' presence, standing right beside her in the memory. Furthermore, she reported that He said something along the lines of "I was with you when this happened, I am with you now, and I will always be with you." One might expect that she would no longer feel abandoned or alone, *but she experienced minimal tangible benefit even though she was very convinced that she was truly perceiving the Lord's presence* – she reported that His words did not *feel* true, and that it seemed like His presence "didn't make any difference." Eventually we discovered that she was maintaining strong dissociative barriers preventing her from feeling the pain in the memory, and that these same barriers also seemed to be blocking the full emotional impact of the blessings the Lord was bringing – they prevented her from being able to *feel* His friendship, from being able to *feel* His compassion, from being able to *feel* His encouragement, from being able to *feel* His attunement, and from being able to *feel* the authority and truth of the words He was speaking. Fortunately, we were able to work with Jesus to dismantle her dissociative barriers, and her feelings of being abandoned and alone evaporated instantly and completely as soon as she was able to *feel* the Lord's compassionate, attuning presence and to *feel* the truth and authority of the words He had spoken. Once the dissociative barriers had been dismantled "I've been abandoned and I'm totally alone," which now *felt completely false*, was replaced with "I was with you when this happened, I am with you now, and I will always be with you," which now *felt completely true*.²⁰

Therefore, I now have a much more humble approach to "testing the fruit." I am much more humble regarding the possible causes. If I notice that an issue thought to be resolved seems to have returned, if I notice that an issue Jesus appears to address does not feel fully resolved, or if I notice that "something just doesn't feel right" with respect to expected efficacy *I assume that there are reasons for these disappointing results, but I realize that the cause may be something other than a counterfeit Jesus*. In fact, other sources presenting as Jesus is much less common than the other possible causes just describe. With respect to "testing the fruit," there are still two scenarios that lead me to suspect a counterfeit Jesus until proven otherwise:

- 1.) The person claims to be perceiving the Lord's presence, she reports that He is consistently speaking and working in various ways, and this happens in session after session *but there are no observable, lasting changes*.
- 2.) The person describes "Jesus" initiating dramatic interventions and making bold statements that clearly indicate "It's time to wrap this up," but the results are very disappointing.

Overwhelmed by the complexity? Go back to the basics: As we look at this complexity that can sometimes feel overwhelming, it is important to come back to three of our most trustworthy, "back to basics" principles:

Care for your personal connection with the Lord: When you encounter complicated situations *there is no substitute for sensing the Lord's presence and receiving His guidance*. Do whatever you need to do to optimize the quality of your own, personal relationship with the Lord.

Build an increasingly strong and accurate "knowing" with respect to *who the Lord is and how He works*: As mentioned above, recognizing counterfeits by an increasingly strong and accurate knowing with respect to the Lord's character and heart has become the primary way in which I discern other sources presenting as Jesus.

²⁰ She still had other memories that carried "I've been abandoned and I'm totally alone," but these lies now felt completely false *in the context of the specific memory we were working with*.

Get your own healing: One of the most important things you can do to prepare for dealing with complex healing situations is to keep getting your own healing. As discussed at length in “Unresolved Issues in the Therapist/Facilitator: One of the Most Important Hindrances to Emotional Healing,”²¹ getting your own healing, and thereby removing blockages that hinder your connection with the Lord, is one of the most important things you can do to optimize your ability to perceive the Lord’s presence and receive His guidance. Getting your own healing is one of the most important things you can do to address principle number one – caring for your own, personal connection with the Lord. As also discussed at length in the same essay, getting your own healing, and thereby resolving toxic content that otherwise gets transferred onto the Lord, is one of the most important things you can do to address principle number two – growing in your ability to recognize counterfeits by knowing the genuine. Furthermore (once again, discussed at length in the essay just referenced), getting your own healing will also neutralize issues that impair your discernment in a variety of other ways.²²

It’s okay to say “This one is too much for me:” Another important thing to remember is that it’s okay to say “this one is too much for me.” If you are overwhelmed by this discussion of the potential complexity of other sources presenting as Jesus, remember that some emotional healing sessions are very simple and straight forward, and that it is okay to stay with emotional healing work appropriate to your level of experience, training, maturity, discernment, etc. If you are working with someone and you realize you don’t know how to handle the problems you are encountering, it’s okay to say “this one is too much for me,” and then either refer the person to a more skilled facilitator or agree to postpone work with that particular person until you feel adequately prepared. Again, it is perfectly okay to say “I’m just a beginner, so I need to stay with emotional healing work that is more straight forward.” You can even do this with respect to different issues in the same person. For example, if you and a friend/colleague are learning by practicing on each other and you encounter a particular issue that is beyond your current level of skill, you can simply acknowledge this and then find a more manageable target, either referring her to a more skilled facilitator to address the complex issue or agreeing to postpone work on that particular target until you feel adequately prepared. I would greatly prefer that you start learning to facilitate, even though you only feel comfortable working with easy problems, than that you never start because you are too intimidated by the possibility of encountering problems that are too difficult.

Comments regarding “sample” explanations and questions: Note that the sample explanations and questions to internal parts are just examples, and are provided especially for those who have not had much experience with internal parts and need some help getting started. The ideal is to get to the point where you understand the principles thoroughly, and the explanations and questions can flow in your own words as the Holy Spirit guides you.

²¹ Available as free download from www.kclehman.com

²² See also “‘Triggered’ Positive Thoughts and Emotions” (available as free download from www.kclehman.com) for additional discussion of how unresolved issues can impair your discernment, and, correspondingly, how healing can improve your discernment by resolving these issues.

Parts Speaking for Jesus: Summary and Sample Page

Summary of clues indicating internal parts “speaking” for Jesus:

Jesus appears to come with truth and healing, but the “fruit” (pertaining to the *specific* lies and/or issues that have been *directly addressed* by the supposed Jesus) does not last, either with testing during the session and/or with observation over time.

Jesus appears to address guardian lies, but they don’t move and/or the *exact same* guardian lies come back.

Something just doesn’t feel right. For those familiar with the Lord’s character and heart, the ways He works, the kinds of things He says and does, and the results that usually follow from certain interventions on His part, “something just doesn’t feel right.” You are familiar with the Lord’s authentic presence and work, and something about the presence and/or work of this apparent Jesus just doesn’t feel right.

Sample explanation, questions to internal parts:

Explanation: **“Sometimes parts of a person’s mind learn how to help him by speaking truth when he is upset. Sometimes parts try to help or protect the person by speaking for Jesus, or even pretending to be Jesus. I think this might be happening here because _____** (Describe the observations that lead you to suspect this. For example, ‘It *seems* like Jesus has been speaking and working, but nothing seems to be changing,’ or ‘It *looked* like Jesus spoke to the guardian lie, but it isn’t moving,’ or ‘I have never seen Jesus make the kind of angry, judgmental comments He’s making here,’ etc.)”

Questions to internal parts (depending on how confident I am, and also depending on what kind of relationship with internal parts is already in place):

“Are there any parts that know about this?”

“If there are any parts that have been trying to help by speaking for Jesus (or ‘presenting as Jesus,’ whichever seems most appropriate), could you please talk to me?”

“If there are any parts that have been speaking for Jesus (or ‘presenting as Jesus,’ whichever seems most appropriate), could you please talk to me?”

“Can I please talk to the part or parts that have been speaking for Jesus (or ‘presenting as Jesus,’ whichever seems most appropriate)?”