

“Jesus called on people’s imagination all the time. He was constantly telling stories and painting word pictures. He asked people to imagine the kingdom of God as a mustard seed, as yeast, as treasure hidden in a field...every time we take the bread and wine at a communion service, we use our imagination to enter the reality of Jesus’ body broken and blood poured out for us.”

Pritchard, Sheila, *The Lost Art of Meditation: deepening your prayer life.*

Scripture Union: Bletchley, UK, 2003,
p43

Our imagination is a valuable
vehicle of God’s grace to us.
Enjoy rediscovering part of your
essential nature as a child of
God.

Imaginative prayer



What is Imaginative prayer?

Imaginative prayer is the name given to prayer which helps us enter more fully into the passage of Scripture we are reading, by using our ability to form pictures or inner impressions in our minds.

While we are used to reading Scripture to learn more about Jesus and the story of God's relationship with people throughout history, praying with the Scriptures using our imagination may be a new experience and for some Christians, one that has raised questions in the past.

We can be assured that, if we are serious about getting closer to God, then God will sanctify our imagination, using it as a vivid and wonderful tool to help us learn more about God and about ourselves.

Imaginative prayer 'puts us in the picture' with the Gospel characters or helps us see the Gospel stories played out in our own homes and neighbourhoods.

The Practice of Imaginative Prayer

THE GUIDELINES

1. Choose a Gospel passage in which someone is meeting Jesus. Read through the passage two or three times until it is familiar.
2. Sitting comfortably with eyes closed, silently ask the Holy Spirit to guide and protect you. Offer to God any concerns you may have about your ability to use your imagination
3. Using all your senses let the Gospel passage gently unfold in your awareness - see the people, hear the voices, taste..., smell..., touch ...
4. Put yourself into the Gospel passage - perhaps as an observer, or someone helping another; perhaps near the action, even talking to Jesus. Let the story unfold, let the dialogue take shape, simply be present without striving to make anything happen.

5. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

6. Spend some time reflecting on what has taken place. You may want to make a note in your journal and share something of what has happened - or not happened - when you have time with your spiritual director.



Not everyone finds this easy so do not worry if it does not seem to "work" for you - some people for example are more likely to form inner impressions without clear detail. Whether or not you see or feel anything, God is touching your spirit, and will work his good purposes out in your life.