

Scripture Based Imagination

Purpose: to experience God's love in a new way by using story and imagination. We will use our imagination positively, in contrast to worry, which is a use of the imagination negatively.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.
Ephesians 1:17-18 ESV

Many have found these uplifting and enjoyable.

For those of us who:

1. Have difficulty believing God The Father loves them personally, individually, and not only collectively or based on merit or performance.
2. Know about God's love intellectually but want to experience God's love.
3. See God The Father as angry, judgmental, punishing or controlling.
4. Do not feel forgiven for past mistakes.
5. Have no template for God's love. i.e. did not have an earthly father who demonstrated God's safe, secure, patient love and faithfulness.
6. Feel loved primarily when producing or performing.
7. Were enjoyed or encouraged little in childhood. Don't believe they are unique, irreplaceable and a delight.

Stories from the Bible allow us to see God's Kingdom for the purpose of transforming the way we think and live. Sometimes these stories lose their effect because we've heard them before.

The purpose of Scripture Based Imagination is to feel loved by God using your Spirit-led imagination in a positive way. In these stories you become an active participant and experience the love of God in a different way than simple passive observation.

A depiction of God in any art form requires an active imagination and interpretation of scripture. I believe these works of imagination to be scripturally sound – however, they are not a substitute for scripture. Please take everything you hear, read or experience and compare it to scripture, just as the Bereans did in Acts 17:11. The Holy Spirit will guide you. Jesus promises, "when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth." (John 16:13-15)

When we watch movies, listen to music or view/sing/participate in any form of artistic expression, we must use spiritual discernment. Is this work honoring to God? Is the spirit of the artist healthy and life-giving? If you feel uncomfortable at

any time, with any work of art, stop and ask God for guidance and clarity before you continue.

Jesus did only what he saw the Father doing. (John 5:19) Appropriate and healthy physical touch and verbal encouragement was part of the life of Jesus and should inform our image of God the Father, whom Jesus came to represent.

Biblical examples of God's character:

1. The Father embracing and kissing his prodigal son. Father is not judgmental or condemning. He is generous with him and celebrates him. The older brother is angry. (Luke 15:11-32)
2. John, who calls himself, "the disciple Jesus loved," leans against Jesus chest to ask a question. (John 13:23)
3. Mary anoints Jesus' feet with perfume and wipes his feet with her hair. Disciples object but Jesus allows it. (John 12:1-8)
4. A woman with a bad reputation cries on Jesus' feet and wipes them with her hair. His dinner companions think that Jesus does not know the reputation of the woman who is "touching" him. Jesus knows her reputation and allows her public physical expression of affection. (Luke 7:38)
5. ... you have seen how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way that you went until you came to this place. (Deut. 1:31)
6. The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. (Ex. 34:6)
7. God speaking, "Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you..." (Is. 43:4)