

The power of IMAGINATION EZ 8:12

What does the Bible say about this subject? Usually it's not good.

Gen 6:5 says, "The imagination of every man and women was evil continually."

Rom 1:21, "Knowing God, they did not glorify Him as God, neither were thankful. But they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."

In Mark 7:20, "Inside the heart comes evil thoughts."

Today I want us to see how our imaginations play a vital role, not only for those who live wickedly, but also for those who live righteously. Let's look at what our imagination is and answer some questions to help understand more about it.

I. What is the imagination?

Through the screens of the imagination, things are passing through the screens of the mind. By doing this one can see pictures. It's what the imagination does. It takes an idea or thought and frames it into a picture.

In Luke chapter 15, Jesus gives an example of how the imagination works.

The prodigal son painted a picture of life being at its best. After being in the hog pen, his imagination began to paint another picture. He imagined what it would be like to be back home. His imagination pictured this, "I'm going to get up and go home. And when I get there, I will say to my dad, 'I've sinned against you and I've sinned against heaven.'"

You see in the parable how the imagination can work both ways. It can work in a negatively and positively.

2. Why is it Dangerous?

One of the reasons why the imagination is often associated with evil is because of the secrecy involved. In Ezekiel 8, the Elders of Judah are visiting with Ezekiel while being held as a captive in Babylon. While he is sitting, Ezekiel receives a vision from God.

In the vision, he is transported to Jerusalem where he sees 70 Elders of Israel go into a dark place. Inside you have all kinds of images, and paintings of idols. The idols were not there physically but their pictures were drawn and the elders began to worship the images drawn on the wall.

They thought, "here is a place hidden from everyone, even hidden from God where nobody could see." When separated from the world, it's easy to allow our minds to paint pictures that are evil which in turn can have an impact on our lives.

In Matthew 5:27-28, Jesus gives this warning. "You have heard that it was said to the ancients, "You shall not commit adultery." But I say to you that whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

In 2 Samuel 11, we read about King David walking on the rooftop of his house. There he saw a beautiful woman bathing. As a result, His mind began to paint a lustful picture. Even after finding out she was married, David perused and acted on his thoughts. After receiving news that she was pregnant, David's imagination began to run. "How can I cover this up?" What can I do prevent anybody knowing?

David may have thought that he was clever, but what his imagination failed to do was paint a picture about the consequences of sin.

Ps 51:10, Out of the anguish of allowing his imagination to go the wrong way, David cried out "create in me a new heart."

3. What should we Picture?

In Matthew 7:12, Jesus said, "Whatever you want others to do to you, do also to them."

How can do that without using your imagination? Jesus says, "stop and paint a picture in your mind, how do you want others to treat you?"

1 John 3:15, "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." What is the attitude of my heart toward others?

Jesus says in Mt 5:44, "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,."

I would suggest that the very moment we begin to have pictures of hatred to pray. If the picture I am painting is ugly and unkind, let us ask God saying, "help me change the picture."

Think about the Lord's church and how it was bought by the blood of Christ (Eph 5:27). Picture the lost and what life must be like without God. Let your mind paint a picture of a widow who is lonely, a person who is sick, a child who has no dad or mom.

Then paint a picture of making life easier for that person. That is what our imagination can do!

Conclusion: Ever stop and think about what the Bible says about heaven?

Imagine painting a pic of judgment, the final seen where everyone is standing before God. Picture Jesus saying, "I know him, I know her, "my blood has washed their sins away. They held my hand and served me faithfully on the earth."

Picture the Lord's return. Let your imagination paint a picture of eternal joy and fellowship with God.