

HOME CHURCH GUIDE:

- CHECK-INS: Introduce, check-in
- CARE: Needs in the group
- COMPASSION: What is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbours to join in?
- GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS Church-wide and group-only
- DIG IN: "Breaking the Ice" question (group facilitator), discuss questions as a group
- PRAYER: Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

1. What do you like/dislike about winter weather?
2. How would you describe what prayer is?
3. How do you pray? Talk about different aspects.
4. Reread the key verses in the Sunday teaching. Initial thoughts about them in light of the teaching?
5. What do you think about the use of your imagination?
6. When are you most imaginative in your life right now?
7. What other aspects of the teaching jumped out to you?
8. Would you commit to trying these spiritual exercises with imaginative resting in Christ, three times a week for the rest of the winter season?

2 CORINTHIANS SERIES

Imaginative PRAYER

Spirit-inspired "seeing" of Jesus changes our being. Seeing his glory, changes us to be more like him, from "one degree of glory to another". You can strive or you can see your way into change. When faith moves from a mind-game into an experience we start to be changed. What you see, envision, you become.

2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:6, 10:5; Romans 1:18-28,8:6-7; Ephesians 1:18; Philippians 3:19; Colossians 3:2-4; Hebrews 12:1-2

TAKE OFF

To embrace this Biblical context, we must pause and comprehend the language of spiritual sight, imagination, and spiritual hearing in the Bible and Christian Tradition. This language includes "dreams", "visions", and "leading" in the Bible. It speaks to a reality which our modern, secular world denies or reduces to being only of your creation. Yet our late modern world affirms it through play; the arts, movies, sports, and in certain areas of philosophy and theory. And then we are full circle back to the spiritual—it's all spiritual.

Story

In the last of the Harry Potter movies, Harry is killed but not dead, and is in an "in-between" place where he meets his mentor who has died but is not dead and asks...



CONNECT WITH US ANYTIME!

- Get information, make comments, ask questions, share thoughts
- Prayer requests
- Sign-up for our weekly e-newsletter
- Join a Home Church

FLIGHT: The Biblical Theology of Spiritual Sight

- **2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:6; Romans 8:6; Ephesians 1:18** The seeing/ beholding is of a spiritual sort—it is looking inward at a reflection in your mind.
- **2 Corinthians 3:14-16** When you are an unbeliever in Jesus, you are unable to see the Lord as believers do.
- **2 Corinthians 10:5** Paul teaches that unbelievers are under a demonic stronghold that stands up "Against the the knowledge of God" **2 Corinthians 10:5**
- Sin is "bad imagination" A sinner can still imagine things, but it's a shrunken imagination because it does not allow imagination of God and God's ultimate love, grounded in all reality.
- **2 Corinthians 3:18-4:4** context
 - It is clear that what the Lord can cause to pass through your mind as a believer is different than an unbeliever.
 - The place where the Holy Spirit produces a reflection of "the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" **2 Corinthians 4:6** is in the regenerated, renewed mind of the believer.
 - It is through this vision that we are "transformed by the renewing of our minds" **Romans 12:2** and set free from the patterns of this world.
 - All believers have this capacity, but many don't use it consistently.

"Throughout church history exponents of the cataphatic tradition have maintained that allowing the Spirit to point us to Christ in imaginative, vivid ways is not only permissible but necessary if our relationship with God is to be vibrant, real, and biblical. In the early church we find such spiritual giants as Gregory of Nyssa, St. Augustine, and John of Damascus advocating communing with Christ through inner images inspired by the Holy Spirit. Yet it is Origen who in the early church most closely echoed Paul's own teaching about beholding Christ. He expressed the role of imagination in prayer most powerfully when he wrote concerning Christ as the image of God, Let us therefore always fix our gaze on this image of God so that we might be able to be reformed in its likeness.... For if the human who has been made in the image of God, by contemplating against his nature the image of the devil, becomes like him through sin, so much more will he, by contemplating the divine image in whose likeness God has made him, receive through the WORD and his power that form which had been given him by nature." (GB)

- St Teresa of Avila
- **The Practice of "Resting in Christ"** Everything we do in our spiritual lives will be enhanced (most of the time) if it is done with vivid mental images.

FOUR ASPECTS

1. Resting in Truth

2. The Setting

3. Finding your Inner Sanctuary/Castle

4. Encountering Jesus

LANDING