

The Power of
IMAGINATION

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The Power of
IMAGINATION

UNLOCKING
YOUR ABILITY
TO RECEIVE
FROM GOD

Andrew Wommack

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The Power of Imagination

Unlocking Your Ability to Receive from God

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INTRODUCTION



Imagination is the dynamo, the power source of life. But most people don't understand its importance. They don't understand that God built imagination into our makeup. Psalm 103:14 says:

For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

The same Hebrew word that was translated “*frame*” in this verse was translated “*imagination*” or “*imaginings*” five times in the Old Testament (Gen. 6:5, 8:21; Deut. 31:21; 1 Chr. 28:9, and 29:18). Our imagination is the frame or spine of our existence. It's the doorway to our potential and affects the way we view life (Prov. 23:7). But people relegate imagination to the realm of childhood fantasy. They underestimate its influence in their lives and try to receive from God without first activating their imaginations.

When Jamie and I started out in ministry, the Lord gave us a vision of reaching multitudes—of touching people all over the world. And though we knew that this was God’s will for our lives, there was very little evidence suggesting it would come to pass. People stayed away from our meetings by the thousands. We struggled to find traction. It was frustrating. Then, in 2002, the Lord spoke to me from Psalm 78 and told me I was limiting Him by my small thinking. You see, even though I knew God’s will for my life, I could not see myself doing it. I couldn’t see myself standing in front of thousands of people or influencing millions on television. I couldn’t imagine people speaking my name in the same breath as other ministers who had impacted the world. And because I couldn’t see it, I didn’t. The Lord showed me that in order to fulfill His will for my life, I had to change the way I thought. I had to start using my imagination.

Your imagination is like your spiritual womb. It’s your creative center. Genesis 11 records the account of the tower of Babel. As the ancient population grew and began spreading out upon the earth, the people gathered on the plains of Babylon. There, they devised a plan to make a name for themselves (Gen. 11:4) and to reach heaven.

*And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have **imagined** to do.*

Genesis 11:5-6, emphasis added

That's amazing! The imagination of this unregenerate people so threatened God's plan for mankind, He had to put a stumbling block in front of them—by dividing their language—to slow them down and give His plan time to work out. God saw their imagination as a threat to His plan for man. Wow!

Imagination is powerful. It is the first step in doing. If you can imagine something, you can do it. Yet many Christians don't understand this. Believers all over the world pray for healing and never experience it. They pray for prosperity but never receive it. Why? Because they don't know how to use a godly, positive imagination. They don't see themselves healed. They don't see themselves prosperous.

If you want to see God's will for your life come to pass, if you want to reach your full potential, you need to understand both the power of your imagination and the correct way to use it.



Chapter 1

WHAT IS IMAGINATION?



According to the *Houghton Mifflin American Heritage Electronic Dictionary*, the word *imagination* means “the process or power of forming a mental image of something not real or present.” Many people confuse imagination with vision. But vision is “a mental image produced by the imagination” (*HMAHED*). You can’t have vision without an imagination. And while these words might be used interchangeably sometimes, I want to focus on imagination—the ability to see what isn’t present.

Most adults associate imagination with childishness. They’ve been taught that using their imagination or believing in something they cannot see is fantasy. This same dictionary calls fantasy an “illusion” or “a delusion,” a “whimsical notion,” or “a daydream.” Just look at the definition of the word *delusion*:

“a false belief held in spite of invalidating evidence.” Fantasy isn’t real. It isn’t based on validating evidence. But imagination is real.

Imagination is the ability to see with the mind what you cannot see with the eyes. If I were to ask you how many windows were in your childhood home, I bet you’d know, even though you probably never counted them. Thanks to your imagination, your mind’s eye can recreate your childhood home and walk you through it room by room.

Whether you realize it or not, you use your imagination every day. You use it to remember where you parked your car or to give someone directions. You can’t live without imagination. If I were to say the word *dog* to you, you wouldn’t picture the letters D-O-G in your mind. Instead, your mind would bring up a picture of a dog. If you owned a little white dog, that’s probably the picture you would see. But I could change your picture with my words. If I said the words *big black dog*, your picture would change.

Imagination helps you “see” what can’t be seen. It creates the pictures in your mind that help you remember, read, and plan. But imagination can only work with the information you give it—good or bad, right or wrong (Luke 6:45). If you fill your imagination with the garbage of this world, that’s what it will produce. But if you renew your mind to the truth of the Word, your imagination will help you receive from God (Rom. 12:2).

If I had the space, I could go through almost every main character in the Bible and show how each one used their imagination to receive from God. When the Lord spoke to Abram

(before his name was changed to Abraham) in Genesis, God told him to leave his father's house and go to a land he would later inherit (Gen. 12:1). Abram couldn't see the land God spoke of; he didn't know from experience that it would be a good land. As far as we know, he'd never traveled any farther than Haran (Gen. 11:31). So, why did Abram leave everything he knew? I believe it was because the Lord's words engaged his imagination.

Abram's imagination was essential in his ability to receive from God—and thus become Abraham. And so is yours. You cannot accidentally accomplish God's will for your life. A while back, I received an email from a lady who works at one of our Bible college campuses. She was praising the Lord and thanking me, saying, "I was made for what I'm doing. This is exactly where God wants me to be." Sadly, most people can't say that. They don't know God's will for their lives. They don't have a vision—a mental image—of their future. They're like water, just going with the flow, following the path of least resistance. But any old fish, even a dead one, can float downstream.

When the Lord spoke to Abram and told him to go, Abram didn't know where he was going. He didn't know what life would look like outside Haran, but he started out anyway. Abram had a vision of a better inheritance than what Ur or Haran could provide, and as he sought the Lord, Abram's imagination began working. As he traveled the land, Abram saw himself owning it. He saw his descendants living there. His imagination produced a vision that became clearer and clearer the farther he got from Ur.

I believe this is why the Lord gave Abraham the promise that his seed would be as numerous as “*the dust of the earth*” (Gen. 13:16) and “*the stars*” (Gen. 15:5). Every day Abraham had dust on his feet, and every night he looked at the stars. These things kept God’s promise constantly in front of him and helped quicken his imagination.

Abraham’s vision was like a roadmap for his life. Think of it. If you were traveling from Colorado to New York, you’d want a map—an idea or picture of where you were going. Without one, any old road would do. But not any old road will get you where you want to go in life.

Most Christians don’t have a clear vision for their lives. They cannot see God’s will. But instead of seeking the Lord and engaging their imaginations like Abraham did, they let the circumstances of life push them around. They leave a good church and the support system of friends and family to move cross-country for a hundred-dollar raise. They spend thousands on medicines that help them cope with sickness and disease. They mortgage their future to buy boats they won’t use and extra televisions they don’t need. They settle for less than God’s best.

Proverbs 29:18 says, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish.*” Vision, or the image produced in your imagination, gives you hope for the future. Without it, you’ll never fulfill God’s plan for your life. Circumstances will divert you, hardship will steal from you, and you’ll quit. In the fifty years since God called Jamie and me into the ministry, there have been many opportunities for us to quit. We’ve dealt with poverty and

slander and have lost relationships, but vision kept us going. When I was spit on and threatened at gunpoint, when people lied about me, when people called the ministry a cult, it would have been easy to say, “This isn’t worth the effort.” Instead, I let my vision motivate me. I encouraged myself by focusing on what God told me to do, and now it’s paying off!

A person’s vision will sustain them when everything around them seems contrary.

Do you have a vision—a hope-filled picture of the future? Does that picture match God’s picture for you? The good news is, regardless of the decisions you’ve made or how far off course you find yourself, God is better than any GPS system. If you’ve made a wrong turn or gotten off track, He can get you back on. But you’ll need the power of your imagination.



Chapter 2

THE MISSING LINK



Your imagination is responsible for creating the roadmap that your life follows. Whether you realize it or not, your life is exactly the way you've imagined it to be. Proverbs 23:7 says that as a man "*thinketh in his heart, so is he.*" If you see yourself poor, no matter how many zeros are on your paycheck, your wallet will always experience more month than money. If you feel victimized or oppressed, there will always be some person or circumstance keeping you from reaching your goals. You may know that God wants you well and prosperous (3 John 2). You may even be praying for it. But if you can't see yourself as God sees you, you'll never experience His best.

Years ago, a woman came to work for us who'd been abused by her husband. Though she'd gotten out of that situation, she feared men—all men. In her mind, men were evil, and they couldn't be trusted. To her, everything men did was an attempt to gain control or manipulate her. This woman let the

circumstances of her past paint a distorted picture of reality. And she filtered every interaction through that picture. Her imagination was out of control, and it cost her dearly.

Your imagination is the dominant controlling factor in your life. It works like a governor on a car. Some vehicles have built-in safety features called governors. A governor controls a car's speed. Once a driver hits the speed limit set on their car, the governor kicks in to restrict the amount of air and fuel the engine receives. No matter what a driver does, they can't go above that limit. Your imagination works the same way. But unlike a car, the Manufacturer does not set your imagination's limits. You do.

A good friend of mine grew up under a mean, angry father. Living under his father's roof was oppressive. He told me once how his dad used cars for parts. They probably had fifty junk cars parked on their farm at any given time, and his dad would take parts out of one to repair something else. Every time my friend helped repair the cars, his dad would say, "You're so stupid! You can't screw a nut on a bolt."

After years of hearing that message, it became a self-fulfilling prophecy in my friend's life. I remember working with him on a car years later. And as smart and capable as my friend was, I'd watch him shake every time he had to put a nut on a bolt, terrified he'd cross-thread it. One time my friend had put the nut on just fine, but he was so afraid he'd cross-threaded it, he took the nut off and put it on again. He kept doing it until he eventually cross-threaded that bolt. To this day, I've never seen my friend put a nut on a bolt that wasn't cross-threaded. His

dad's words painted an image in his mind that limited what he could do.

You may not realize it, but you filter everything—who you are, what you can do, your circumstances, even the way you've been treated—through your imagination. And that imagination, if not properly directed, limits what God can do in your life.

My mother was a schoolteacher. She loved education and always made a big deal of our academic achievements. When I was in sixth grade, my brother took a test that tagged his IQ at genius level. When I heard my mother talking about his results, I asked about my score. She said I was “two points above an idiot.” Years later she laughed about that day, saying, “That’s not true, Andy. I must have been joking with you.” But I never knew it was a joke. Her words, spoken in jest, painted a picture of mediocrity in my mind that I struggled with for years. It wasn't until the Lord revealed spirit, soul, and body to me that my imagination began to change.

Before I understood the concept of spirit, soul, and body, my reflection in the mirror was the only “me” I knew. Others' opinions and my own feelings drove my life. I didn't realize that the real me—my spirit—was the part of me created in God's image (Gen. 1:26).

*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and
I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be*

*preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord
Jesus Christ.*

1 Thessalonians 5:23

We cannot see, hear, or feel our spirits with our five senses (1 Cor. 2:14). There's only one way to understand what spirit is: to look into the Word of God.

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and
sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even
to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of
the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the
thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Hebrews 4:12

God's Word shows us spiritual truth. Jesus said, "*It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*" (John 6:63).

As I began to dig into the Word as a young man, I discovered that "*he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit*" (1 Cor. 6:17) and "*as [Jesus] is, so are we in this world*" (1 John 4:17, brackets added). I began to realize that my spirit was identical to Jesus's spirit and that I could do the same things He did (John 14:12). God's Word began changing my internal picture, and as that picture changed, so did I. Instead of seeing an introvert in the mirror, I saw Jesus living in me. I didn't see a man with a little bit of Jesus's nature and a little bit of my own.

I saw a man God-possessed—someone complete and powerful, able to heal the sick, raise the dead, and use the authority Christ had given him (Mark 16:17-18).

Once I saw those things in my imagination, it was only a matter of time before I began seeing them in my life. Since then, I've seen the dead raised, blind eyes and deaf ears opened, people healed of cancers, and others walk out of wheelchairs. I've seen all sorts of miracles. My own son was raised from the dead. All of these things happened because the Word of God painted a different picture in my imagination.

Many people want to see the miraculous. They want to experience God's best and see Him work in their lives, but they do not see themselves as God sees them. In their minds, they limit themselves to only being human. They spend their lives coping with allergies, worrying about the stock market, and fearing every report they see on the "ten spies" network. They expect to get sick. They expect to grow old and lose their eyesight.

But as believers, we are not only human! Our physical bodies may be mortal, our minds may still be corruptible, but we are new creatures in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17). The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead is living in us. In our spirits, we are pure and holy, full of God's power. One-third of us is wall-to-wall Holy Ghost (Rom. 8:11)! And if we choose to believe it, our spirits will dominate, trumping what goes on in the physical realm. But we first need to change our imaginations.

Years ago, John G. Lake, a well-known healing minister in the early 1900s, told a story of his experience in South Africa during an outbreak of bubonic plague. People were getting sick

and dying like flies, but no one would bury the dead. Everyone was terrified of contracting the deadly disease—everyone except Lake.

Lake worked diligently during the plague, burying multiple people a day, until a British ship with supplies and doctors finally arrived. After watching Lake, one of the doctors asked him how he'd been protecting himself from infection. Lake replied that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus was his protection and that no germ would ever attach itself to him.

Not many people would say that. They simply cannot see it. But Lake did. When he declared that no germ could touch his body and live, the doctors laughed. They didn't believe him. So, Lake proposed a test. He told a doctor to collect spit from one of the dead and put it under a microscope. As expected, live germs covered the slide. Lake suggested they put those germs in his hands and look again. The doctors did, and what they saw astonished them. When the germs touched Lake's skin, they died!

Did you know that this same power is promised to every believer? Psalm 91:10 says:

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

Anyone who believes the promises of Psalm 91 and confesses them in faith (Ps. 91:2) can have the same protection from plagues that John G. Lake had, but most Christians never experience these kinds of results, because they are more impressed by what they hear on the news than what they hear from the

pulpit. They're more moved by what their doctor says than by what God says. Instead of their inner image coming from the light of God's Word, it comes from the light of a television set. Most Christians limit themselves to the world's experience. They do not let the Word of God change their imaginations.

When the Lord spoke to me in 2002 (shortly after the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers) and told me I was limiting Him, I called my staff together and said, "I don't know how long it takes to change this image on the inside, but I am going to change. I am going to do what God called me to do." Though everything in the natural screamed that expanding during such a time was impossible, I was shocked at how quickly our ministry began prospering.

During this time, no one was watching Christian television. No one was giving to Christian ministries. Everyone's attention was drawn to the news. Every television ministry I knew of suffered. Parachurch ministries slashed their budgets. Then, without warning—before I could get anything out to my partners, before I could do anything but change my imagination—our income doubled. It was like there was a dam in the spiritual realm holding back all the blessings God wanted to get to me. God was providing. He was faithfully performing His Word. But something had stopped up the flow. When I turned on my imagination and changed my internal image, that dam broke. And just like Deuteronomy 28:2 promises, a flood of God's provision overtook me.

You can read more about my personal experience with changing my imagination in my book *Don't Limit God*.



Chapter 3

NARROW- MINDEDNESS



This concept of imagination should not be foreign territory for Christians. We deal in “things unseen” all the time. We believe in a God and a heaven we’ve never seen. We stake our eternity on the words of an ancient book. And we believe that a Man we’ve never met paid the price for our sin 2,000 years before we were even born! To the natural mind, this sounds crazy, yet it’s true.

I was listening to the radio recently and heard a talk show host discussing a moral issue with his audience. One of his listeners called in to counter what was being said. “The Bible says—” the listener began, but the show’s host interrupted, “We aren’t dealing in the Bible. We’re dealing with reality. We don’t want any ideas or beliefs. We want reality.” I got so mad, I started yelling at the radio, “The Bible is more real than

anything you can see, taste, hear, smell, or feel!” The physical world, what most people refer to as “reality,” was created by the spiritual. Hebrews says:

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Hebrews 11:3

The Word of God created everything we can see with our physical eyes. The Word is real, but it’s not a reality that can be experienced with our natural senses (1 Cor. 2:14). It cannot be seen with our eyes or touched with our hands. It, like the rest of the spiritual world, must be experienced by faith.

During the “Great Recession” in 2008, when stock prices went down 50 percent and the housing market crashed, the Lord spoke to me about building a world-class Charis Bible College campus. Since that time, we’ve purchased and begun development on 493 pristine mountain acres in Woodland Park, Colorado. We’ve spent over \$70 million above my normal expenses building a 70,000-square-foot building called The Barn to house our Charis classrooms and a 140,000-square-foot building that includes a 3,200-seat auditorium, our phone center, and our Charis offices. And we have renovated another 60,000-square-foot building on the property for our AWM offices and television studio. All of this was done debt-free.

While everyone else was struggling and just barely getting by during the “Great Recession,” we were prospering. We were

building. There's no natural explanation for this. We didn't take out a loan or tap into investor funds. We didn't have a huge amount of savings to draw from. All we had was God's Word. We let the Word of God paint a picture of what was possible, of what we could do, and that picture has become so clear and so strong that we can no longer live outside it. We've become narrow-minded in pursuit of God's will!

You see, faith and imagination work hand in hand. You can get so focused, so narrow-minded, on Scripture that you can't see anything contrary to it. That's a positive thing!

Years ago, my board sent me to the doctor for a stress test. (The insurance policy we were applying for required one.) As the doctor began prepping me for the treadmill, his nurse asked if they could shave the hair off my chest to give the electrodes a place to stick. "You can't shave my chest," I said. "This is virgin hair. It's never been touched!" They honored my request and tried to stick those things to my chest without shaving it, but about thirteen minutes into the test, they started falling off. In order to finish, I had to hold two electrodes in place, the nurse held two, and the doctor held two more. When I finished running, the doctor looked over my results. Then he started grunting and writing on my chart. When he finally looked up at me, he said, "Here's the name of a doctor I know. He's a specialist. I want you to go over there and get tested right away. We may admit you into the hospital for open-heart surgery before the day is over."

I was shocked! I didn't feel ill. The only reason I went to see the doctor was for that insurance policy. How could I need

open-heart surgery? As I sat there for a second looking at the doctor, I began thinking about the image of health and strength God's Word had painted inside me. And I said to him, "That's a lie. I don't believe it. You look at that readout again and tell me that it says I have a heart problem."

The doctor just looked at me (I guess he wasn't used to people calling him a liar) and said, "Well, it doesn't really say you have a heart problem. It just says that there was an abnormality during testing. It may be nothing, but it could be something serious. We need to get you tested." He didn't think about the fact that those electrodes were falling off my chest! "That's not what you told me," I said, getting mad. "You told me I might have to have open-heart surgery before the day is over. You lied to me!"

"Fine," he said, tearing up the paper. "You're on your own; get out of here."

Later that day, on my way home, a woman's car died. It was blocking the road, so I got out and pushed it to the nearest pull-off. I pushed it up the hill and around the corner—by myself. Not bad for a guy who was supposed to have open-heart surgery that same day!

My point is, the Word of God has the power to change what you see. My dad died when I was twelve years old. He had heart problems. He actually died twice, once in 1952 and again in 1962. The first time he died, the hospital pronounced him dead, covered him with a sheet, and put him on a gurney in the hall. It was about two o'clock in the morning. Our pastor back home was leading an all-night prayer meeting for

him. At the same moment the male orderly came to push my father down to the morgue, our pastor stood up back home and said, “Either God has done what He said and healed him, or he’s dead. Either way, I’m done praying; I’m going home.” Next thing anyone knew, my dad was raised from the dead. He kicked off his sheet, and the orderly wet his pants right in the middle of the hospital corridor! Because of my dad’s heart issues, every time I go in for a checkup, the doctors start projecting his problems onto me.

I could behave like the rest of the world, giving those words weight. I could let the doctors’ words intimidate me and influence the way I see myself. Instead, I stand on the Word of God that says Jesus purchased my healing at Calvary (1 Pet. 2:24). I trust that God’s Word is flawless, that He is “*a shield unto them that put their trust in him*” (Prov. 30:5) and that no plague can come nigh my dwelling (Ps. 91:10). I believe that “*the joy of the LORD is [my] strength*” (Neh. 8:10, brackets added). I encourage myself with scriptural examples like Moses, who, on the day he died at 120 years old, climbed Mount Nebo. The Bible says that “*his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*” (Deut. 34:7). I break the doctors’ curse by saying, “Fifty percent of me is my mother. She lived to be ninety-six and was as healthy as a horse. Why don’t you look at her side?” At the time of this writing, I’ve outlived my dad by more than fifteen years. And according to my last nuclear stress test, I have the heart of a teenager!

After the doctor in Colorado Springs flunked me, my friend (a doctor on my board) invited me down to his place in Louisiana for a nuclear stress test. He said, “Those treadmill tests

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are wrong 50 percent of the time. Never base a health decision on one of those tests.” So, they injected me with some kind of dye and took pictures of my heart at rest and after exercise. My friend told me, “There’s nothing wrong with you. You have the heart of a seventeen-year-old.”

Brothers and sisters, you don’t have to let your genes, your education, or your past dictate your future! Give yourself permission to become narrow-minded in the Word. Change your imagination.