

## Have Faith in Your Imagination 07 A Healthy Soul Dreams Big STUDY GUIDE

God made you to see with your eyes. You can see the physical world with your eyes.

But to see the SPIRIT realm, He has given us IMAGINATIONS. But without GOD and without grasping his mercy, you cannot use your imagination properly.

Read Ephesians 2.I-I8. Before you became a Christian, you were a child of the devil. You were disobedient, you were selfish. You were only living to satisfy the lusts of the flesh.

That is a bit controversial today – the dogma of the day is that we are all good, nice people, and Jesus just makes us a little bit nicer. No – we were all bad people before JESUS. No one is good without JESUS. There is no-one GOOD WITHOUT THE LORD.

That's the truth – there is just different levels of lostness. We were all dead in our trespasses and sins, we have all fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3.23). If you are not born again, you are in the devil's family. You are disobedient. That's what we all were before surrendering to CHRIST. Most people are not admitting this in the world – they do not admit they are selfish, that without CHRIST they have no hope. They say "I am not perfect, I am not a saint, but I am really good" – well, ok, who wants to be the nicest sinner in hell?

Read 2 Cor. 10.12. It is foolish to compare yourself with someone else. You might never have raped someone, or killed someone, or mugged someone – but you have been selfish, you have hurt people in your life. WE HAVE ALL SINNED AND WE ALL NEED A SAVIOUR. If you do not admit that, you cannot be saved. YOU CANNOT GET HELP THAT YOU DO NOT ADMIT YOU NEED.

That's why we live in a nation with laws – most of our laws originally were based on the BIBLE's teaching and that we all needed a society where we are safe.

Read Jer. 17.9. Our heart without Jesus is wicked. WITHOUT JESUS WE ARE SELFISH. THE ONLY GOOD THING IN YOUR LIFE IS GOD – and if you disagree, you are wrong. You are deceived. You being a CHRISTIAN IS NOT BASED ON OUR GOODNESS – it's based on GOD'S GOODNESS. If you think there is a GIANT SCALE IN HEAVEN – good deeds and bad deeds – that's ISLAM, that's not CHRISTIANITY.

Read James 2.10. There is only one law, and if you break any part of that one law, you have broken the law just the same as anyone else who has broken it. Lazarus and Jairus' daughter were both dead, but both needed a resurrection. One was not more dead than the other, they just looked worse. WE ALL NEED A RESURRECTION – God is not comparing you to anyone, God does not grade on the curve, THERE IS ONE STANDARD, living exactly like JESUS – and if you don't meet the standard – if we are not as perfect and pure as JESUS – we fail and we need SAVED!

Read Romans 10.9=10. We are saved by knowing Jesus, not by doing good! It's not GOOD PEOPLE DO GO TO HEAVEN. BAD PEOPLE DO GO TO HELL. In fact, it is Forgiven people GO TO HEAVEN and FORGIVEN people go to hell. BUT THOSE WHO ACCEPT God's forgiveness GO TO HEAVEN, and those who reject it GO TO HELL.

I don't live a bad life – I had a bit of a tearaway period as a teen – but that's irrelevant – the truth is that I AM A SINNER. I am not at the standard of JESUS; my test result is not 100%. Compared to JESUS, all my goodness is like a dirty, filthy rag.

It's not BEN is really good and I just need some JESUS to MAKE UP A DIFFERENCE. NO, no, no – WE ALL NEED MERCY ON OUR BEST DAYS!

After General Lee's surrender, at the end of the Civil war, Lincoln spoke to a large crowd from the balcony of the White House. He told them about the considerate policy he had in mind for the South. At the end of his speech, Senator Harlan asked, "What shall we do with the rebels?" The vindictive crowd shouted back, "Hang them!" Tad then turned to his father and said, "No, no, Papa. Not hang them. Hang on to them!" "That's it!" replied Lincoln joyfully. "Tad has it. We must hang on to them!"

GOD IS NOT GOING TO HANG YOU – you deserve it – BUT IF YOU TURN TO HIM YOU WILL FIND MERCY – YOU WILL FIND GRACE AND LOVE! YOU WILL FIND HIS GOODNESS! And it is HIS GOODNESS that matters not ours.

I do not care how good you have been. AT ALL. NONE OF US WANT JUSTICE – YOU have sinned, you have hurt people – justice for you is HANG THEM. Mercy is HANG ON TO THEM! If you got what you deserved, you will end up in HELL.

You do not need Muhammad teaching you what time of the day to pray. That doesn't help. You do not need Buddha to teach you the noble path. That path is a dead end. YOU NEED JESUS – YOU NEED FORGIVENESS, YOU NEED A SAVIOUR!

In every other religion salvation is what you do – EVERY OTHER RELIGION IN THE WORLD IS JUST A TO-DO LIST that IS NOT ENOUGH to GET YOU AN AUDIENCE WITH GOD! BUT BECAUSE OF JESUS – YOU ARE NOW NO LONGER ALIENATED FROM GOD – YOU ARE NOW IN THE COVENANT OF PROMISE – IN HIS BLOOD AND NOW YOU CAN HAVE HOPE – YOU CAN IMAGINE POSITIVE THINGS IN THIS WORLD.

If you are struggling to IMAGINE – come back to the CROSS – come back to MERCY.

A lot of secular sources are teaching on IMAGINATION – but they do not have the cross so they cannot work long term. WE NEED TO COME BACK TO JESUS AND HIS WORK.

Look what GOD HAS DONE! See it in our imagination!

In Ephesians 2.4, God had mercy on us. In Ephesians 2.5, God made us alive. In Ephesians 2.II-12 we find out that now we are with Christ, now we are with God in this world, now we are family to the covenant!

You have no life, you have no victory if you don't have Jesus. JESUS IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. It is that simple. BUT WHEN YOU GRASP THE MERCY OF GOD ON YOUR SINFUL HEART AND LIFE – you get hope!

You see you will AT TIMES STRUGGLE TO DREAM BIG BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE DONE IN YOUR LIFE, YOU KNOW HOW SELFISH YOU HAVE BEEN. YOU KNOW YOU HAVE FAILED. BUT WHEN YOU COME BACK TO MERCY, YOU REALIZE GOD'S GRACE IS ENOUGH. THE CROSS IS ENOUGH. You are now with CHRIST – not because of what you have done, but because what GOD HAS DONE.

When I was in hospital with eczema, remember I didn't know the mercy of GOD – I thought GOD made me sick, I thought God was punishing me or training me or something. BUT I READ MATTHEW 3.17 which said "THIS IS MY SON" – that jumped out at me so STRONGLY. GOD LOVED ME – GOD CARED FOR ME LIKE A FATHER TO THE SON.

I started to realize, slowly, but definitely “God is good. He is a good good Father, that’s who HE IS – HE DIDN’T DO THIS. HE DIDN’T MAKE ME SICK, THIS IS NOT GOD’S WILL, GOD WANTS ME WELL. I told God if I stayed in hospital all my life – I would still serve Him, but I started to praise HIM, that’s what started opening my heart to expecting my healing.

Always this is true: REALIZING GOD’S MERCY BRINGS HOPE. The revelation of MERCY and GRACE In the face of our SIN – that will bring HOPE FOR OUR FUTURE.

ANCHOR YOUR IMAGINATION ON MERCY. MERCY IS THE REALIZATION THAT NO MATTER HOW SELFISH YOU HAVE BEEN – you will always BE LOVED AND BLESSED AND HONOURED BY GOD – your dreams and your destiny are not based on YOUR GOODNESS but HIS GOODNESS.

GOODNESS AND MERCY FOLLOW US ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES – SO WHEN YOU DON’T DESERVE THE GOODNESS YOU STILL GET THE GOODNESS because goodness is with mercy!

THROW SOME MERCY IN YOUR IMAGINATION –

IMAGINE WHAT THINGS WOULD BE LIKE IF YOU HAD NEVER SINNED. IF YOU HAD NEVER DONE A THING WRONG – WHAT WOULD GOD DO FOR YOU, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.

No shame, no rejection, no pain. THAT NEEDS TO GET INSIDE YOUR IMAGINATION.

IT’s HARD TO DREAM BIG AND IMAGINE BIG WITH A WOUNDED SOUL – but today, we are going to see some souls restored (Read Psalm 23.I).

I know the truth – I am talking to people today who have been broken at a soul level. People have violated your space, forced you to do things you didn’t want to do. Some of you are hurting, some of you are full of bitterness in your soul – rooted. Some of you are divorced – that is ripping your soul apart. YOUR SOUL IS HURT, INJURED AND NON-FUNCTIONING

I teach on dream big and you don’t know how to dream, your soul is broken.

I preach on believing and receiving, and you cannot believe and receive because your heart is broken, and faith has to come from the HEART. Your heart is in your soul.

Your spirit is perfect. Your soul is your mind, will, emotions, and conscience. Also – the HEART – the CENTRE OF THE SOUL – that is your identity. A HEALTHY HEART means you need to see yourself the way that GOD SEES YOU – more than a conqueror, more than a champion. An unhealthy heart is not strong enough to HOLD a GREAT SELF IMAGE! It isn’t strong enough to HAVE the self-control in the spirit flow out of it and HOLD PEACE and JOY, and not walk in anger.

Some of you, your imagination is NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO SEE YOU WINNING. Some of you your conscience tells you that you are wrong when you have done nothing wrong. Some of your emotions are not strong enough to throw off depression and shame and rejection. You are redeemed from rejection, you are accepted in the beloved, and yet you are still lost and struggling in your mind because your soul is injured.

Some of you – there is one injury from one event and you cannot hold the visions and dreams, the creativity, the life, the spiritual ideas, the image of yourself that you need to carry around.

**BUT I HAVE GOT GOOD NEWS FOR YOU – THE LORD RESTORES YOUR SOUL!**

Jesus CHRIST did not just come to earth to restore your spirit and heal your body, HE CAME TO RESTORE YOUR SOUL. He didn't die SPIRIT AND BODY, and HIS SOUL WAS HAPPY AND JOLLY ON THE CROSS – HE TOOK YOUR SIN FULLY, and TOOK YOUR HURT AND PAINS AND SICKNESS FULLY. We will learn this in the WORD TODAY!

The two biggest wounds on your soul are SHAME and REJECTION, and today you are going to receive your healing, your deliverance from SHAME and REJECTION. Your soul is going to be taken to a place of HONOUR AND REJECTION, just like SPIRIT goes from sin to righteousness, death to life AND your body has gone from SICKNESS to HEALTH, and your life has gone from CURSED TO BLESSED.

There are several emotional wounds – two deepest are shame and rejection.

Let's start with SHAME. There are people in this room – you carry shame around everywhere. Jesus took your shame. Let me start at the cross – HE BORE YOUR SHAME, so YOU COULD ENJOY HIS HONOUR. This is part of the exchange of the cross – WE ALL KNOW:

- He took our SIN and gave us HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS
- He took our SICKNESS and gave us HIS HEALING
- He took our CURSE and gave us HIS BLESSING
- He died our death and gave US HIS LIFE

That is the exchange of the cross – I don't have time to teach on that, I am making the assumption you all realize this. And it is all BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

We this is just as true:

**HE TOOK YOUR SHAME AND GAVE YOU HIS HONOUR**

This is going to be a great moment as you are about to realize this exchange and be set free – today is a SOUL HEALING MEETING – SOUL IS GOING TO PROSPER LIKE NEVER BEFORE, YOUR LIFE IS GOING TO PROSPER! This is not some theological lecture – not my style, this is going to LEAD TO FREEDOM.

IF YOU REALIZE THAT ON THE CROSS JESUS TOOK YOUR SHAME, YOU REALIZE THAT HE HAS PROVIDED YOU HONOUR through HIS GRACE and YOU START TO BELIEVE IT YOU WILL BE FREE! Some of you as well are going to take this message this evening and use it to set others free!

SHAME IS SO COMMON – it is becoming more COMMON in our age. So many people are walking wounded – not visible BODY WOUNDS – but the wounds of the SOUL – and the most common is SHAME, and the big issue with SHAME is that you are too ASHAMED TO ASK FOR HELP.

Read Hebrews 12.2. Jesus endured the shame of the cross. HE TOOK YOUR SHAME AT THE CROSS – HE BORE IT! That's the truth! The shame that Jesus went through on the

cross – you can barely imagine it. BUT HE DID NOT LET THAT STOP HIM – He died sin, He died a criminal, He died falsely accused, He died naked, He died surrounded by criminals, He died abandoned by his friends, He died in front of his own mother.

ALL OF THESE THINGS BRING SHAME! He took all that shame – and DID IT FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM! You know the JOY SET BEFORE HIM – it is found in Ephesians 2.6 – His joy is to have you seated together with Him in heavenly places. The greatest joy of God is to exalt you!

We have taken the IMAGE OF GOD, and redefined and filtered it THROUGH OUR OWN SHAME – just like ADAM DID! So, when GOD is after US – we run like Adam, ashamed, naked, afraid. Our own soul has painted the image of a GOD that is out to kill us and expose us and hurt us – and our own soul is so damaged that IT COULDN'T HOLD THE GLORIOUS TRUTH – God is there to honour you, to love you, to bless you, to clothe you, to restore you, TO LIFT YOU OUT OF THE GUTTER AND PUT YOU ON THE SEAT WITH HIM, TO PUT YOU ON THE THRONE – TO HONOUR YOU!

Read John 5.44. To believe God's Word you have to accept that God wants to honour you and stop looking for honour from people.

So many Christians struggle to BELIEVE THE WORD, struggle to RECEIVE FROM GOD – because their WOUNDED SOUL is not able to CARRY THE HONOUR THAT GOD WANTS TO GIVE YOU. The more honour God you can receive from God – the more you realize GOD HAS PUT YOU HERE – SEATED ON THE THRONE – then the more you can believe and receive. And the reason God can honour you is that Jesus bore your shame!

The most shameful form of death in all history – is death on a cross. It was a death reserved for only the worst kinds of criminals. They stripped Jesus totally naked, they hung HIM naked – not in the middle of a cathedral – but in the middle of a busy crossroads with people walking around. Mocked by people. WHAT HE WENT THROUGH WAS SHAME. He endured the shame – so you could be HONOURED.

He took the LOWEST OF THE LOW so you could be the HIGHEST OF THE HIGH.

That is what shame is – an awareness of how LOW you are – you don't want people to know that you are that LOW, you are nervous in a room, especially a room full of WONDERFUL CHRISTIANS – you are scared that people will find out that you are an imposter, that you are not on their level of holiness, of wisdom, of health. YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO COPE – you are the criminal, you are the accused, you are this and that.

BUT JESUS BECAME LOWER THAN YOU – to LIFT YOU TO NOT JUST THE HIGHEST PLACE ON EARTH, but the HIGHEST PLACE IN ALL THE PLANETS, IN ALL THE HEAVENS.

You know the gospels DO NOT give much in the way of information on the crucifixion – they tell us that he was crucified but don't say much, but you can get information from the OLD TESTAMENT – some powerful prophetic information

Read Isaiah 53.3. We hid our faces from HIM – HE WAS UGLY – it was REVOLTING TO SEE HOW BEAT HE WAS. Read Isaiah 53.2. He had no form – that meant DID NOT EVEN LOOK HUMAN. That is staggering. ALL HIS WOUNDS, ALL THE FLESH RIPPED OFF OF HIM IN THE WHIPPING, SORES OPEN TO THE AIR, EVERYONE COULD SEE.

Read Psalm 69.7. It is about Jesus. WHY DID JESUS TAKE THAT SHAME, TAKE THAT LOW PLACE – FOR YOUR SAKE! FOR YOU – HE TOOK YOUR SHAME! Have you noticed SHAME covers the face – that someone wounded with shame CANNOT QUITE LOOK YOU IN THE EYE.

PSALM 69 is all about JESUS ON THE CROSS – some beautiful revelations about what happened – the BIBLE is wonderful. Rather than have Matthew and Mark write about the cross, it was written down years before it happened in Psalms!

Read Psalm 69.1-2. The cross meant waters came up to the neck of Jesus – and the Hebrew here is the same as the word for soul. The cross hit Jesus in his spirit – he died in his spirit, hit his body – HE BORE YOUR SICKNESSES, but it also hit his soul – HE ENDURED THE SHAME! He sank to the BOTTOM of your SIN – HE sank to the lowest of the low in the SLIME OF YOUR SIN.

Read Psalm 69.4 This verse is quoted in John 15.25, letting us know that being Christlike means you will be hated.

Read Psalm 69.8-9. This is quoted in John 2.17. Jesus bore our shame because He loves the temple of the Lord.

Read Psalm 69.21. This is clearly not about David, David never got given vinegar to DRINK – that PSALM was not written about HIM it was written about JESUS.

JESUS was TOTALLY NAKED ON THE CROSS – that is shame. That is often what shame feels like. Our pictures of the CRUCIFIXION – the little loincloth, the drop of blood on each hand, nice perfectly adjusted crown of thorns. THAT IS NOT WHAT HAPPENED – it was a thoroughly SHAMEFUL EXPERIENCE – TOTAL SHAME. HE WENT TO THE LOWEST PLACE POSSIBLE! HE TOOK YOUR SHAME TO GIVE YOU HIS HONOUR!

Why are so many people ashamed in our generation, today?

1. Past Humiliation. Maybe from events in your childhood at school or in the family.
2. You have behaved shamefully, maybe before you got saved, maybe after. Things that you would hate for others to know. If other people found out, you would be nervous they would hate you, and that causes a sense of shame. You feel like an outsider and a hypocrite.
3. Sexual Sins. These seem to bring a very specific and distinct sense of shame.
4. Sexual Abuse. One of the tragedies of our generation is sexual abuse of children. 25% of girls and 20% of boys have been molested by for the age of 12. And if you think that doesn't happen in churches, you are wrong. You open the lid of the church, and you see it and it's heart-breaking.

But whatever the pain is, whatever is causing you shame – you need to know that JESUS took that pain on the cross into HIS OWN SOUL. He was exposed and naked and TOOK YOUR SHAME

If you are here today and wounded by shame, today the HOLY SPIRIT IS GOING TO HEAL YOU. He is the most gracious, most tender individual in the universe, totally tactful and totally truthful. Do not run from him – remember the gospel. Jesus took your shame and gave you HIS HONOUR. He bore it – no one else, HIM. He removed it from you – HE TOOK IT OUT OF THE WAY.

Shame is always your face down, face down before God, face turned down when you pray – whole churches pray like that – all baptized in shame, and no one has ever preached freedom from shame to them.

RIGHT NOW YOU ARE GOING TO GET HEALED FROM SHAME – by putting your faith in the CROSS – we are going to thank God for doing it, put our faith in HIM and receive the grace, and you are going to BE HEALED IN YOUR SOUL.

If there is shame in your heart and soul, you cannot lift your face up before people or before God – and you want to be set free, then speak it out and we will pray with you and believe with you to be set free from shame.

I believe Jesus took my shame, so I can share His honour

The presence of God is now resting and flowing – you are being set free from SHAME. Lift your face to GOD – thank HIM right now for your HONOUR – HE HAS HONOURED YOU – HE HAS SAT YOU ON THE THRONE – HE HAS TAKEN YOUR SHAME! YOU SHARE IN HIS HONOUR.

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QUESTIONS

- I. What is the purpose of our imagination?
2. What were we like before we became Christians according to Ephesians 2?
3. Are we all good people?
4. What is the only way to get into heaven?
5. Why is it so important we realize the mercy of God and our need of that mercy when it comes to using our imagination?
6. How do we know Jesus took our shame on the cross?
7. How can we receive the honour that comes from God (John 5.44)?
8. What sort of things cause shame in people?
9. Have you struggled with shame either in the past or now?
- I0. Do you want prayer to be released from shame?
- II. Where are we seating in the spirit right now?
- I2. What does that mean for our honour and being free from shame?
- I3. What about this message inspired, encouraged and challenged you the most?