

Imaginative Prayer: Small Group Guide

Purpose: This one-page guide facilitates a small group discussion and practice after watching the **Imaginative Prayer** video, helping participants engage their imaginations to encounter God in Scripture.

Welcome (5 minutes)

- **Icebreaker:** Share a story or a movie that felt so real to you that you felt like you were actually there. What made it feel so vivid?
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Opening Discussion (10 minutes)

1. When you hear that "God can speak to us through our imaginations," what is your initial reaction?.
 2. Dallas Willard defined prayer as "simply talking to God about what we are doing together". How might using your imagination help you see what God is doing?
 3. What are the potential benefits or challenges of trying to "play Scripture like a movie" in your head?.
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Key Insights (10 minutes)

- **Engaging the Senses:** Why is it helpful to consider smells, sounds, and physical feelings when reading a Bible story?.
- **Perspective:** Which perspective do you usually take when reading Scripture—a bystander, a participant, or an omniscient observer?.
- **The "Between the Lines" Rule:** Discuss the idea of filling in the blanks without contradicting the text. How does this keep our imagination grounded in truth?.

Practice Together (10 minutes)

- **Group Practice (5 minutes):**
 1. Sit comfortably and close your eyes.
 2. Listen as someone reads **Mark 4:35-41** (Jesus stills the storm) twice.
 3. Spend 5 minutes in silence, imagining the scene. Feel the spray of the water, the boat rocking, hear the wind, and see Jesus sleeping in the boat.
- **Debrief (5 minutes):**
 1. Where were you in the boat?
 2. What was the most vivid sensory detail you experienced?
 3. What did you notice in the story that you hadn't seen before?
 4. Whose perspective did you find yourself taking?
 5. What did you feel when Jesus spoke?

Application and Closing (10 minutes)

- **Discussion:** How could this practice help make Scripture feel more "relational and formational" for you this week?
- **Group Challenge:** Commit to practicing imaginative prayer minutes this week with a narrative passage. Pick one "Miracle Story" from the Gospel of Mark. Each day, spend 10 minutes "inhabiting" that story. Next time we meet, share one "sensory" detail from your week that made Jesus feel more "real" or "present" to you.

Closing Prayer: "Lord Jesus, thank You for the gift of our minds and our imaginations. Thank You that You meet us in the stories of Scripture. Help us to see You, hear You, and follow You more closely this week. Amen."