

A photograph of a forest path covered in fallen leaves, with sunlight filtering through the trees, creating a misty and ethereal atmosphere. The path leads into the distance, flanked by tall, thin trees. The ground is covered in a thick layer of brown and orange leaves. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

AWAKENED
IMAGINATION & THE
SEARCH

NEVILLE GODDARD

Awakened Imagination & The Search



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To Bill

“Imagination, the real and eternal world of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow. What is the life of Man but Art and Science?”

WILLIAM BLAKE, Jerusalem

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN, On Science

CHAPTER ONE - WHO IS YOUR IMAGINATION?

I rest not from my great task To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the immortal Eyes Of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought: into Eternity Ever expanding in the Bosom of God, the Human Imagination. - Blake, Jerusalem 5:18-20

CERTAIN WORDS in the course of long use gather so many strange connotations that they almost cease to mean anything at all. Such a word is imagination. This word is made to serve all manner of ideas, some of them directly opposed to one another. Fancy, thought, hallucination, suspicion: indeed, so wide is its use and so varied its meanings, the word imagination has no status nor fixed significance.

For example, we ask a man to “use his imagination”, meaning that his present outlook is too restricted and therefore not equal to the task. In the next breath, we tell him that his ideas are “pure imagination”, thereby implying that his ideas are unsound. We speak of a jealous or suspicious person as a “victim of his own imagination”, meaning that his thoughts are untrue. A minute later we pay a man the highest tribute by describing him as a “man of imagination”.

Thus the word imagination has no definite meaning. Even the dictionary gives us no help. It defines imagination as (1) the picturing power or act of the mind, the constructive or creative principle; (2) a phantasm; (3) an irrational notion or belief; (4) planning, plotting or scheming as involving mental construction.

I identify the central figure of the Gospels with human imagination, the power which makes the forgiveness of sins, the achievement of our goals, inevitable.

All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. [John 1:3]

There is only one thing in the world, Imagination, and all our deformations of it.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. [Isaiah 53:3]

Imagination is the very gateway of reality.

“Man”, said Blake, “is either the ark of God or a phantom of the earth and of the water”. “Naturally he is only a natural organ subject to Sense”. “The Eternal Body of Man is The Imagination: that is God himself, The Divine Body. [yod, shin, ayin; from right to the left]: Jesus: we are His Members”.

I know of no greater and truer definition of the Imagination than that of Blake. By imagination we have the power to be anything we desire to be.

Through imagination, we disarm and transform the violence of the world. Our most intimate as well as our most casual relationships become imaginative, as we awaken to “the mystery hid from the ages” [Colossians 1:26], that Christ in us is our imagination.

We then realize that only as we live by imagination can we truly be said to live at all.

I want this book to be the simplest, clearest, frankest work I have the power to make it, that I may encourage you to function imaginatively, that you may open your “Immortal Eyes inwards into the Worlds of Thought” [William Blake], where you behold every desire of your heart as ripe grain “white already to harvest” [John 4:35].

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. [John 10:10]

The abundant life that Christ promised us is ours to experience now, but not until we have the sense of Christ as our imagination can we experience it.

The mystery hid from the ages... Christ in you, the hope of glory, [Colossians 1:26,27,] is your imagination.

This is the mystery which I am ever striving to realize more keenly myself and to urge upon others.

Imagination is our redeemer, “the Lord from Heaven” born of man but not begotten of man [The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed or the Symbol of Faith, 325/381 A.D.].

Every man is Mary and birth to Christ must give.

If the story of the immaculate conception and birth of Christ appears irrational to man, it is only because it is misread as biography, history, and cosmology, and the modern explorers of the imagination do not help by calling It the unconscious or subconscious mind.

Imagination’s birth and growth is the gradual transition from a God of tradition to a God of experience. If the birth of Christ in man seems slow, it is only because man is unwilling to let go the comfortable but false anchorage of tradition.

When imagination is discovered as the first principle of religion, the stone of literal understanding will have felt the rod of Moses and, like the rock of Zion [Isaiah 28:16; Romans 9:33], issue forth the water of psychological meaning to quench the thirst of humanity; and all who take the proffered cup and live a life according to this truth will transform the water of psychological meaning into the wine of forgiveness. Then, like the good Samaritan [Luke 10:33-35], they will pour it on the wounds of all.

The Son of God is not to be found in history, nor in any external form. He can only be found as the imagination of him in whom His presence becomes manifest.

O, would thy heart but be a manger for His birth! God would once more become a child on earth. [Angelus Silesius, a 17th century poet]

Man is the garden in which this only-begotten Son of God sleeps. He awakens this Son by lifting his imagination up to heaven and clothing men in godlike stature. We must go on imagining better than the best we know.

Man in the moment of his awakening to the imaginative life must meet the test of Sonship.

“Father, reveal Thy Son in me” [James Montgomery]

and “It pleased God to reveal His Son in me”.
[Galatians 1:15,16]

The supreme test of Sonship is the forgiveness of sin. The test that your imagination is Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is your ability to forgive sin. Sin means missing one’s mark in life, falling short of one’s ideal, failing to achieve one’s aim. Forgiveness means identification of man with his ideal or aim in life. This is the work of awakened imagination, the supreme work, for it tests man’s ability to enter into and partake of the nature of his opposite.

Let the weak man say, I am strong. [Joel 3:10]

Reasonably, this is impossible. Only awakened imagination can enter into and partake of the nature of its opposite.

This conception of Christ Jesus as human imagination raises these fundamental questions: Is imagination a power sufficient, not merely to enable me to assume that I am strong, but is it also of itself capable of executing the idea?

Suppose that I desire to be in some other place or situation. Could I, by imagining myself into such a state and place, bring about their physical realization? Suppose I could not afford the journey and suppose my present social and financial status oppose the idea that I want to realize. Would imagination be sufficient of itself to incarnate these desires? Does imagination comprehend reason? By reason, I mean deductions from the observations of the senses.

Does it recognize the external world of facts? In the practical way of everyday life is imagination a complete guide to behaviour?

Suppose I am capable of acting with continuous imagination, that is, suppose I am capable of sustaining the feeling of my wish fulfilled, will my assumption harden into fact?

And, if it does harden into fact, shall I on reflection find that my actions through the period of incubation have been reasonable? Is my imagination a power sufficient, not merely to assume the feeling of the wish fulfilled, but is it also of itself capable of incarnating the idea?

After assuming that I am already what I want to be, must I continually guide myself by reasonable ideas and actions in order to bring about the fulfillment of my assumption?

Experience has convinced me that an assumption, though false, if persisted in, will harden into fact, that continuous imagination is sufficient for all things, and all my reasonable plans and actions will never make up for my lack of continuous imagination.

Is it not true that the teachings of the Gospels can only be received in terms of faith and that the Son of God is constantly looking for signs of faith in people – that is, faith in their own imagination?

Is not the promise

Believe that ye receive and ye shall receive, [Mark 11:24,]

the same as “Imagine that you are and you shall be”? Was it not an imaginary state in which Moses “Endured, as seeing Him who is invisible” [Hebrews 11:27]?

Was it not by the power of his own imagination that he endured?

Truth depends upon the intensity of the imagination, not upon external facts. Facts are the fruit bearing witness of the use or misuse of the imagination.

Man becomes what he imagines. He has a self-determined history. Imagination is the way, the truth, the life revealed.

We cannot get hold of truth with the logical mind. Where the natural man of sense sees a bud, imagination sees a rose full-blown.

Truth cannot be encompassed by facts.

As we awaken to the imaginative life, we discover that to imagine a thing is to make it so, that a true judgment need not conform to the external reality to which it relates.

The imaginative man does not deny the reality of the sensuous outer world of Becoming, but he knows that it is the inner world of continuous Imagination that is the force by which the sensuous outer world of Becoming is brought to pass. He sees the outer world and all its happenings as projections of the inner world of Imagination.

To him, everything is a manifestation of the mental activity which goes on in man's imagination, without the sensuous reasonable man being aware of it.

But he realizes that every man must become conscious of this inner activity and see the relationship between the inner causal world of imagination and the sensuous outer world of effects.

It is a marvelous thing to find that you can imagine yourself into the state of your fulfilled desire and escape from the jails which ignorance built.

The Real Man is a Magnificent Imagination.

It is this self that must be awakened.

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. [Ephesians 5:14]

The moment man discovers that his imagination is Christ, he accomplishes acts which on this level can only be called miraculous. But until man has the sense of Christ as his imagination,

“You did not choose me, I have chosen you”, John 15:16,

he will see everything in pure objectivity without any subjective relationship.

Not realizing that all that he encounters is part of himself, he rebels at the thought that he has chosen the conditions of his life, that they are related by affinity to his own mental activity.

Man must firmly come to believe that reality lies within him and not without.

Although others have bodies, a life of their own, their reality is rooted in you, ends in you, as yours ends in God.

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