

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

RELATIONSHIP REPORTS February 1984 to January 1985

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RELATIONSHIP



PART 10 IMAGING MAKING: A BIBLICAL & A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

DON'Ts vs. DOs

“THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, OR ANY LIKENESS OF ANYTHING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH: THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN TO THEM, NOR SERVE THEM: FOR I THE LORD THY GOD AM A JEALOUS GOD.”

(Exodus 20:4-5).

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The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

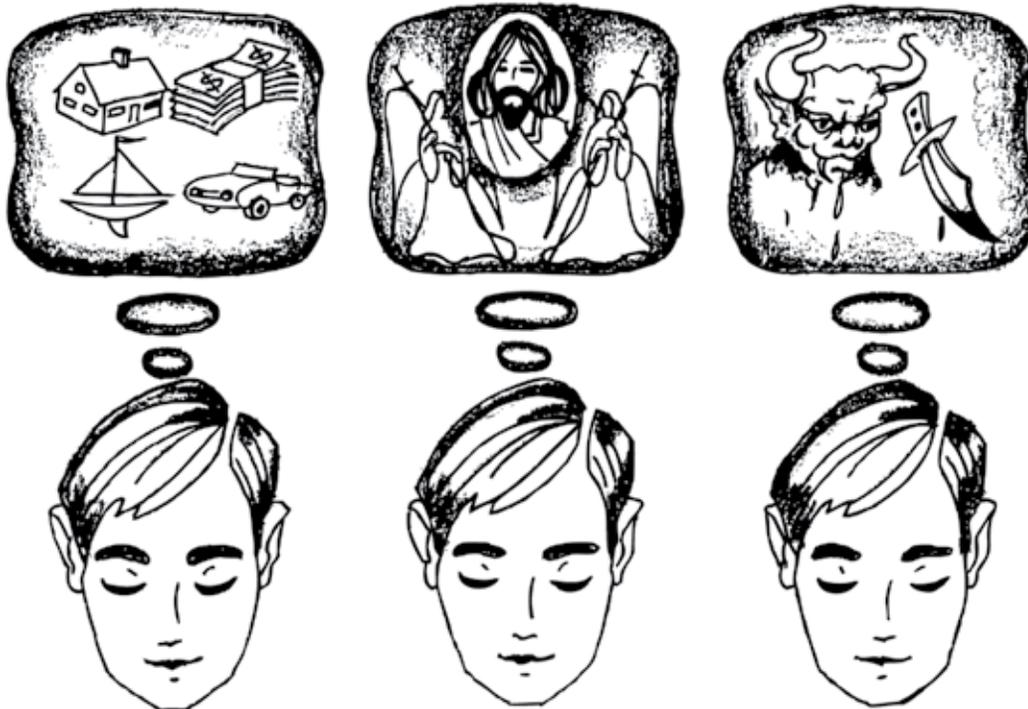
Here [in Exodus 20:4-5] we have a **DON'T** out of the Ten Commandments, Yet, as the Lord has shown me, the other side of the same coin is the **DO**. This commandment speaks of FALSE GODS of provoking the Lord God to jealousy, and it is by **IMAGE MAKING** that this is done.

In our fleshy minds we can readily believe this to strictly apply to things like statues, carvings, and such. However, long before a carved statue is placed in a temple to be an object of worship, it is in men's hearts and imaginations. It is here that it begins: in our very inner imaginations. What it is that our focus of thought is upon. This is what the Scripture refers to.

AN ILLUSTRATION IMAGE MAKING

Sometimes an illustration reveals more about something than a written explanation. Here is an illustration of **IMAGE MAKING**:

IMAGE MAKING



In the three sketches (see above), the **IMAGE MAKING OF MAN** on the far left is the same as the man on the far right, both have “**OTHER GODS BEFORE HIM** [emphasis added]” (Exodus 20:3), and the Lord God is speaking of what we place **FIRST** in our lives, anything—anyone more than

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

HIM, then it is BEFORE HIM and it is a god to us. The two men on the far left and right have “other gods before Him”. This is the DON’T, while the man in the center has HIM FIRST, this is the DO.

As men are taught legalism, right and wrong behavior, and as they are compelled to place stress on ‘appearances’, an evident and great truth that runs throughout Scripture like a rich vein of gold is almost entirely overlooked and invisible to us. Except the Holy Spirit revealed it, I would not have seen it or even known it was there.

CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON

In Romans, Paul writes, “. . . **TO BE CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON . . .** [emphasis added].” (Romans 8:29).

How many take this to mean acting like Jesus?! Yet if it does not mean that, then how are we to be conformed to His image? It is through the God given image making capacity we all have, yet only a precious few even know its power and that it is a vital part of our ability to commune with the Lord our God. It is to each of us a part of our God given make-up it is as integral to us as the very breath we take, and more so.

Years back, out of daily prayer and looking to Jesus, IMAGES of the Kingdom of God came readily. However, it did not occur to me then that VISIONS FROM GOD were seen through the faculty of IMAGINATIONS. Neither did I seek to see a vision of Jesus or of angels, Instead, my heart was wholly set on loving and serving Him Jesus Christ,

And so, I saw visions, I saw Jesus, I saw Angels and more! Without knowing it and in placing Jesus first above all, in Him, I received all that I might desire and much more. Jesus poured endless blessings out upon me as I sought to more and more place Him first above all!

Had I made seeing a vision or an Angel my chief aim, then what would have come would have been false, it would have been BEFORE HIM. But, Jesus was my chief aim, and to know and love Him a deep desire within me, and so I came to know Him and when I saw Him, I KNEW because I had come to KNOW HIM.

Each time I seek to draw near Jesus, I pray a time to give-up, forget, let go of every concern, every question, all burdens lest I come to Him with something between us, something before Him.

There is a big difference between praying and presenting petitions before the Lord, and seeking a relationship of love with Him. Praying with petitions is ASKING, but drawing near Jesus to love him is SEEKING. Both are done in our imaginations!

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

SCRIPTURAL BASIS OF IMAGE MAKING

Most Christians want a Scripture before they will accept a revelation from the Holy Spirit as truth. Trouble is, we have imperfect understandings of Scripture if not wholly incomplete, we cannot see the truth or meaning of a Scripture until we are led by the Holy Spirit into that truth and we cannot be led by the Holy Spirit until we yield, and we will not yield until we know Jesus, His Love and come to Trust Him to keep us safe from all deceptions. It always comes back to having a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

But, while we know little of the DOs of Image Making by actual experience, we tend to hesitate, we can be blind to an evident Scriptural truth. This is not the case with DON'Ts for these we know, and by the contrast we can see what we SHOULD NOT DO, to know what it is we SHOULD DO.

So it seems we learn best out of the Church System teachings which have so severely conditioned us, to recognize the truth by seeing what's error in others and thus in ourselves. As a result, several groups of Scriptures are shared, to that end, that you be aware and might ponder. [Please note that some words in the following groups of Scriptures include some text in ALL CAPS for emphasis.]

Here's one group of Scriptures from the book of Genesis that discuss Noah:

- “God SAW that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every IMAGINATION of the thoughts of his HEART was only evil continually.” (Genesis 6:5).
- “But Noah found grace in the EYES of the Lord . . .” (Genesis 6:8).

In the very beginning of the Bible, we see that God's “SEEING” is directly connected to man's “IMAGINATIONS, THOUGHTS, HEART”. And next, Noah is “SEEN” and so finds grace, as what was in his heart, thoughts and imaginations was towards Him first.

Here's a group of Scriptures from the book of Jeremiah:

- “. . . the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain: they speak a VISION of their own HEART and not out of the mouth of the Lord.” (Jeremiah 23:16).
- “. . . that walketh after the IMAGINATIONS of his own HEART . . .” (Jeremiah 23:17).
- “. . . they are prophets of the DECEIT of their own HEART . . .” (Jeremiah 23:26).

With amazing consistency, you will find the use of the term IMAGINATION, THOUGHTS, HEART from Genesis to Revelation. The theme is always on the same, and it is something in us, a faculty that is misused, that's the source of troubles. We need be aware.

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

Here is another group of Scriptures:

- “. . . These men have set up their idols in their heart and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face . . .” (Ezekiel 14:3).
- “. . . Cast ye away every man the abominations of his EYES and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt . . .” (Ezekiel 20:7). Note: This is identical to Romans 12:2.
- “. . . And be not conformed to this world . . .” (Romans 12:2).

Again we see “OTHER GODS BEFORE HIM” (Exodus 20:3) defined here as ‘idols in their heart’ and this a stumbling block, and because it’s “Before their face”, therefore “BEFORE HIM” they fall. But Ezekiel by the Spirit of God says much more.

Let’s look at this groups of Scriptures from the book of Ezekiel:

- “. . . where was the seat of the IMAGE of jealousy which provoketh to jealousy.” (Ezekiel 8).
- “. . . dig a hole in the wall . . . wicked abominations that they do there [in the Temple]” (Ezekiel 8:9).
- “...behold every FORM of creeping thing and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed [pictured] upon the wall round about.” (Ezekiel 8:10).
- “Hast thou SEEN what the ancients of the house of Israel DO in the dark, every man in the chambers of his IMAGERY?” (Ezekiel 8:12).

Here we see the Temple of the Living God defined as the chambers of our IMAGINATIONS.

DEVEKUT: THE HEBREWS KNEW!

Although I had been taught and exercised image making in prayer for years, it was only after I recently published this in a newsletter, that a report was sent to me speaking of Jewish traditional teaching call **Devekut** which means “communion with God.” In one quote from this Jewish **Devekut**, it stated: “. . .for the spiritual activities of retreat and Devekut and used to IMAGINE the light of the Shekhinah (Heaven) above their heads, as though it were flowing all around them and they were sitting in the midst of the light and while in that meditation . . .”

So, Jesus in His time on earth, spoke to these Jewish teachers saying of them that they had the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, but would NOT enter in or let any others enter in either. This is surely known to the great teachers in the Church today. So, how are they different?!

There is a wondrous difference, in this. The Jewish **Devekut** bathed and delighted in the Shekhinah light by IMAGE MAKING, but we Christians know His Name and may freely enter into the Holy of Holies to fellowship with Him personally, directly, sweetly.

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

THE HEART OF IMAGE MAKING

If you wonder how a prophet sees visions (and I've been asked that many times) it has taken me years to be able to describe visions.

Let us suppose someone were to ask you "Describe how you breathe?" You would, no doubt, be hard pressed to describe it, simply because you do it and don't think much about how you do it. It is natural to us to breathe. The real surprise here is: it is also natural for us to see visions! Seeing a vision is part of our make-up: it is a natural faculty.

A television can receive images traveling in the air from the main broadcast station, then convert them into pictures. But, apart from the power source which enables the TV to operate, the TV is blank. Until you turn the TV on, it is blank as well, and unless you tune the TV to a given channel all you will see is static. Each of us are like TV sets. But, are we plugged into the power source? Are we turned on? Are we tuned in?

VISIONS

Visions come to us through our God-given ability to "IMAGE MAKE" or "IMAGINATION". Being the children of God, made in His LIKENESS AND IMAGE, and seeing that God communicates with us by visions, images, pictures, it was next understood that we in turn communicate with God by the same means. Words themselves are only symbols of pictures. It may surprise you, but for years I have seen that Christians who believe on Jesus, who love Him, SEE HIM—only they don't know this and are not taught to believe this, and therefore they do not see what they see.

Just as we breathe without thinking or conscious direction, so also this faculty of image making operates without conscious direction, for though it surely operates in us, unaware of it's importance most apply no discipline.

IMAGINATION IS LIKE FIRE

IMAGINATION is like fire: it can heat, it can cook, it can be a blessing—or, it can burn, it can destroy, it can harm. It depends on HOW it is used.

When we imagine things out of our self-desires against God's Word and Will, we are conceiving sin in ourselves that will in a time manifest in the flesh. Thus, imagination, when it's self centered, self-seeking, self-glorifying—that's Satan, that is the sin nature in us from Adam. But, when we IMAGINE within the framework of God's Word and Promise, when we connect our 'individual TV sets' into the Power Source of Jesus Christ, it's through Jesus' Love (and that's His Power) that we are able to see THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, which is IN THE SPIRIT.

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

There is no trick or formula to image making, to seeing IN THE SPIRIT. It's as natural to us as breathing. The only difference now is that you are aware, when before you were not; and now you have the opportunity of exerting some control and discipline on this wild faculty that when centered on Jesus is a blessing of great measure and when it is centered anywhere else is the source of deep troubles and woe.

A FALSE SAFETY

Most Christians unaware of the nature and power of this faculty of imagination, have felt safe to imagine whatever they like, so long as they do not DO IT or SPEAK IT. It is a false safety, for whatsoever a man imagines in his innermost thoughts is what he becomes patterned after and then lastly manifests in the flesh.

In the summer of 1984, the worse mass murder in US history took place at a fast food chain on the West Coast. But these murdered were murdered long before the year 1984, for a man had long imagined himself a great "shootist", and thought of shooting others—it was his inner-most imagination, and after years of this he would begin to speak of it at times, and in a day of stress, he would take out his weapons drive to the McDonald's in California and shoot 40 people, killing 21 instantly. Has Paul not spoken of this, when he says to us in the Bible, "*You reap what you sow!*"? Indeed, in this the right or wrong use of image making in ourselves sets in motion a pattern after which we will follow.

THE HEART

The heart of image making is in the fact that it is on a small scale like the creative power of God, except in us because of the Adamic nature, without being conformed to His Will and Plan, its ever bent to evil and not good.

A STUMBLING BLOCK

Genesis 1:3 reads: "**AND GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT.**" But, when He said that, what language did He use? Greek? German? Hebrew? Russian? American? Chinese?

Well, that's one of the ***STUMBLING BLOCKS*** our Christian education does not remove. We know that GOD IS SPIRIT, but how few teach what SPIRIT is. We recognize we have in our very selves God's Likeness and Image, but we don't realize His Likeness in us is the capacity and faculty to IMAGE as He does. When God spoke, "LIGHT" He IMAGED it, and what came followed the very pattern of His Imaged Design.

Again, as you look at words, don't forget that words are only abstract symbols of pictures, of images

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

of things or experiences we have had. When I write the word “Love” without even thinking the word evokes remembrances of many experiences where one did experience love. The memory of loving moments reflects swiftly in our minds in pictures. But, if you see the German word “Lieb” and you do not know German,. It draws a blank. It is meaningless to you. The German word “Lieb” is the equal to the English word “Love”. In other words, a word is in itself meaningless unless you can associate some image of an experience or something seen to that word.

So, God's language and our true language is pictorial and experiential.

If you should meet someone whose language you do not understand at all, but this person is loving and kind and gentle, though you do not understand the words, you can readily understand the actions. This is how Angels can speak all languages. They speak to men by pictures as does God, and God's pictures come with a musical score.

It is all Jesus' Love!

PRACTICAL USES OF IMAGE MAKING

Once one realizes that image making is a faculty, a creative faculty like unto God's, the possibilities are as endless as one's imaginations and this is part of the problem.

Those who seek a relationship with evil are taught to use imagery in what's called witchcraft to discipline their inherent image making power to evil. Satanists are taught to use every form of image of hatred for Jesus to be totally sold out to evil. This alone tells me that it's very much a part of all of our natures to turn to Jesus, for when an individual must make such a strong conscious free will decision to reject Christ, this alone reveals the tremendous drawing power of His Love. So it is in man's system the same, the systems are by design to keep men from drawing near to Jesus.

The first and most sweet and wonderful practical use of image making rests in learning how to imagine ourselves with Jesus, listening to Him, loving Him, talking to Him. For He is the very source of our lives, and our dearest loving friend, kind, gentle, and compassionate. It is through the faculty of image making that we can cut through all the red tape, and simply go be with Him, for no power can stand between us and Him.

HEARING & SEEING

So, have we even begun to see the meaning of the Bible?

We know that Jesus is the author of our Faith. He begins and He finishes Faith in us, and we know

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

also that “Faith cometh by HEARING, and hearing BY THE WORD of God” (Romans 10:17) and is further defined in Hebrews 11 where it says, “Now Faith is the substance of things HOPED for, the evidence of things not SEEN.”

So, we see in the Scriptures that Faith is by both HEARING and SEEING, and this BY the Word of God, and this is JESUS CHRIST! And as we come to HEAR and SEE Him through the Spirit, we wait for the hope of righteousness by Faith (Galatians 5:5). And this hope is to be conformed to His very Likeness and Image, Jesus Christ—and so to grow from the children of promise through belief in Jesus Christ into becoming sons of God through Jesus Christ.

So a very practical use of image making in our meditations is to imagine Jesus’ Love all about us, to be in His very presence, to see and hear Him. As given in the first chapter of this book, the technique of meditation is to deeply ponder a chapter in the Bible, and to bring our focus to Jesus and His powerful personality revealed here, not to the principles apparent, not to the law obvious, but let your focus be on what the Bible reveals about Jesus Himself as a person.

HEALING

In May of 1983, I fell very ill with infections, fever, etc. I had to keep traveling anyway, and so I prayed for Jesus’ help and a healing. When we are under stress, we all tend to be negative in thinking. When things start going wrong, they tend to pull us down even faster, so we tend to go from bad to worse, UNLESS we make a conscious effort to stop the downward spiral.

So, I started by praying, rebuking Satan (taking authority in Jesus’ Name) and it took days to slow the attitude whirlpool that was pulling me down. As I prayed, I began to form an image in my thoughts of my body; seeing the illness, then seeing God’s healing help, and seeing my body well and healthy again. Thus, I presented my petition before God in Words and PICTURES, and when I could see myself healed and well and believed it, I then claimed it in Jesus Name and thanked Him. The illness continued for weeks, abated, then in one instant the Spirit of God moved on me so swiftly it stunned me, and every ill of body was gone as I have “IMAGED”. And so we can ASK in pictures as well as in Words of prayer, both are good but the first (pictures) is the more powerful.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE SPIRIT

When I have gone into spiritual warfare IN THE SPIRIT, seeing myself in God’s Armor, seeing Jesus leading us into battle, seeing the Angels of God with us, seeing demons falling before us, and even shouting in one’s imaginations “PRAISE JESUS CHRIST!” We are to have NO FEAR of being self-deceived, for as we place our trust in Jesus, even if one could deceive self, He will keep you, and His Love for you and in you will cast out all fear, that you flow, move IN THE SPIRIT with rejoicing

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

in Jesus. In a time you will begin to realize it is REAL Imagination, not UNREAL Imagination, and you will grow in Christ in a way you never imagined possible.

THE IMAGE PATTERN & THE KEY

THE PATTERN

The Church systems that teach us to be conformed to Jesus through His Word are not incorrect, but what is left wanting is the specifics, and the knowing of just what is our individual function and call in Christ, in the Body of Christ? We may assume one thing, desire another, and be told to do something different. How are we to know?

A brother in Christ, named Ray, brought the answer to mind some time ago when he stated, “We need an image vision of ourselves in Christ, and we must seek what is our call in Christ.”

Indeed, we do NOT know of ourselves and no man can tell us, but only Jesus Christ knows and if we would know we must SEEK, and to rightly SEEK and receive the image-vision of our call in Christ, we must surrender all things and be wholly yielded to God’s Perfect Will for us—this being accomplished in daily prayer, ASKING the same.

THE KEY

Indeed the **KEY** here is in sincerely praying to be yielded to God’s Perfect Will for us personally.

PATIENT ENDURANCE

Next, it is in learning PATIENT ENDURANCE in this kind of praying for God’s answer. He will answer but only when whatever is in us that would distort His Plan for us is removed. This is only removed by daily enduring prayer, surrendering all things to Him, praying ever to be yielded to His Perfect Will, asking to know what is His Perfect Will and desiring this above all. Likewise, when you can image yourself to be wholly yielded to His Will, and know it is done, then rejoice and give thanks to God, for His Perfect Will is in you and will in His time suddenly be known.

I speak from experience.

In April through May in 1983, I came into a very intimate close union with Jesus by the Spirit of God and in and out of that union, I did see myself in a day coming, walking through the streets of a city, filled with His Love, able and gently touching all who loved Him, calling all others in few words but by the power of His Love. The depth of Jesus’ Love present in me glowed warmly and sweetly and no man did not know the meaning; and I understood another dimension of “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God,” for men did HEAR His Word and were touched by His

The Staff and The Sword Ministry

Relationship Reports

Love and also SAW both the Word and His Love present in me, and all was to His Glory and Praise. There was no doubt or fear in me whatsoever, nor striving but though I was in the world, the more was I in HIM so that in every respect I walked with Him and He in me, so that those who heard and saw me, saw Him.

I was in every sense wholly 'myself in Christ', individual and yet one with Him, for the bond of Love between us was powerful and vibrant and living real. I was bound by no specific function, but moved freely in His Will doing as the Father showed Him, showed me, and so saw the deeper meaning of freedom in Christ. What I was deeply moved by was the wondrous freedom in Him, in His Love and I knew Jesus was walking the earth through me and how great and sweeping was my joy in that.

HIS IMAGE VISION FOR US

So, this is His IMAGE VISION for me, and for many. Yet though it be the call, lest I be wholly yielded to God's Will in and out of prayer and hold this pattern image in my heart, it will not reach fulfillment.

We have no power to make it happen, only the power to yield ourselves to His Will and Plan and earnestly to seek His Perfect Will for us in Faith and Love through prayer always.

God Bless,

Chuck-JOHNEL