

Imagination KJV

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened. Ephesians 1:18a

Experiencing God (seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, and smelling) in the Spirit occurs by revelation with the aid of our imagination. The core of the following teaching on “imagination” came from Neville Johnson. I have continued to do my own work and remain convinced that this application is correct. Imagination is a wonderful gift of God. We experience God by Holy Spirit revelation through imagination. The church has misunderstood its value. Fear of deception has kept us from perceiving Jesus’ presence more fully. We need to trust Immanuel to manifest Himself through His Spirit to His body, the eyes of our imaginations being illumined. I have included the KJV (1611) use of the English word “imagination” here to show the obvious historical bias against imagination in the church.

Sections included in this article are: Greek Word *dianoia*; Is it good or evil?; Vain, empty, evil imaginations out of an evil heart block the knowledge of God; We are to reject these vain imaginations; A good, positive, sanctified imagination out of a pure heart has inspired thoughts; Thirteen New Testament passages containing *Dianoia*; Verses containing “imagination” in NKJV translation; Old Testament verse connecting “imagination” with seeing God; Negative (Only) Use of “imagination” in the King James Version

Greek Word *dianoia*

Dianoia: The Greek word Paul uses for “understanding” in this passage is *dianoia* meaning “imagination, mind, and understanding.”

Dianoia denotes the faculty of thinking; then of knowing; hence, the understanding, and in general, the mind, and so moral reflection; it is rendered “imagination” in Luke 1:51 (negative) “the imagination of their heart” signifying their thoughts and ideas. ([Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words](#), 248)

Because imagination can be negative, often denoting fabrication and fantasy, I refer to the positive and godly use of *dianoia* as **“sanctified imagination.”**

Through the Spirit, the eyes of our imagination connect with the spiritual realm. Paul’s use of *dianoia*, translated as imagination, in Ephesians 1:16–18, suggests that *dianoia*/imagination, is the word used in Scripture for that part of us that receives revelation; perhaps it is even the bridge between soul and spirit.

Is it good or evil?

Like power, the imagination can be used for good or evil.

Dianoia appears in **thirteen passages**: Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 1:51; 10:27; Ephesians 1:18; 2:3; 4:18; Colossians 1:21; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16; 1 Peter 1:13; 2 Peter 3:1; 1 John 5:20. In **nine** of these passages, including Ephesians 1:16–18, it is positive. The other **four** have negative connotations.

One **positive use** is Jesus' command to love God:

Luke 10:27 So he [Jesus] answered and said, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your *mind* (*dianoia*),' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your *mind*.'

Mark 12:30 "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your *mind*, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment."

Jesus' wording seems redundant if soul is defined as intellect, will, and emotions. Yet it isn't redundant if the meaning of mind or dianoia is "imagination." If it is "imagination," it makes complete sense to love the Lord with everything you are: **heart**/spirit; **soul** or intellect, will, and emotions; **mind**/understanding/imagination; and **strength**/body.

Vain, empty, evil imaginations out of an evil heart block the knowledge of God.

Luke 1:51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination (*dianoia*) of their hearts.

Romans 1:21b (KJV) They became vain in their imaginations (*dialogismos*) and their foolish heart was darkened.

Romans 1:21 Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

We are to reject these vain imaginations.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (KJV) Casting down vain imaginations (*logismos*) and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down arguments [vain imaginations] and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge (*gnosis*) of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

A good, positive, sanctified imagination out of a pure heart has inspired thoughts.

If imagination is actually the bridge we use to receive revelation, when a sanctified imagination pictures God, it may be seeing God by the Spirit of revelation.

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Thirteen New Testament passages containing Dianoia

Matthew 22:37 "Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your *mind* (dianoia).’ +

Mark 12:30 "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your *mind* (dianoia), and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.” +

Luke 1:51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination (dianoia) of their hearts. -

Luke 10:27 So he answered and said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your *mind* (dianoia),’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’ +

Ephesians 1:18 The eyes of your *understanding* being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. +

Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the *mind* (dianoia), and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. -

Ephesians 4:18 Having their *understanding* (dianoia) darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. -

Colossians 1:21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your *mind* (dianoia) by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled. -

Hebrews 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their *mind* (dianoia) and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. +

Hebrews 10:16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their *minds* (dianoia) I will write them. +

1 Peter 1:13 Therefore gird up the loins of your *mind* (dianoia), be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. +

2 Peter 3:1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your *pure minds* (dianoia) by way of reminder). +

1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an *understanding* (dianoia), that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. +

Verses containing “imagination” in NKJV translation

Genesis 8:21 And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although **the imagination of man's heart** is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done."

Luke 1:51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in **the imagination of their hearts**.

Old Testament verse connecting “imagination” with seeing God

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose *mind* is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

The word for *mind* in this passage can be translated “imagination”.

Negative (Only) Use of “imagination” in the King James Version (36x's)

Genesis 6:5 And 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 8:21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.

Genesis 11:6 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.

Deuteronomy 29:19 And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:

Deuteronomy 31:21 And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear.

1 Chronicles 28:9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginings of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

1 Chronicles 29:18 O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:

Job 6:26 Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?

Job 21:27 Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.

Psalms 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

Psalms 10:2 The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

Psalms 21:11 For they intended evil against you: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.

Psalms 38:12 They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.

Psalms 62:3 How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.

Psalms 140:2 Which imagine mischiefs in their heart; continually are they gathered together for war.

Proverbs 6:18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginings, feet that be swift in running to mischief.

Proverbs 12:20 Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.

Jeremiah 3:17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

Jeremiah 7:24 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.

Jeremiah 9:14 But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them.

Jeremiah 11:8 Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.

Jeremiah 13:10 This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing.

Jeremiah 16:12 And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me.

Jeremiah 18:12 And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

Jeremiah 23:17 They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.

Lamentations 3:60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their imaginings against me.

Lamentations 3:61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O LORD, and all their imaginations against me;

Hosea 7:15 Though I have bound and strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me.

Nahum 1:11 There is one come out of thee, that imagineth evil against the LORD, a wicked counsellor.

Nahum 1:9 What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.

Zechariah 7:10 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

Zechariah 8:17 And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD.

Luke 1:51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

Acts 4:25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginings, and their foolish heart was darkened.

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginings, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.