

# Prophetic Listening Prayer

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## Part 1. What does the Bible say about Jesus' ministry of healing?

1. Jesus embodied the Kingdom of God. "Behold the kingdom of God is in the midst of you" (Luke 17:21).
2. Jesus healed in union with the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit. He did what he saw the Father doing and spoke what he heard the Father saying.
  - a. "The Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel...." I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me" (John 5:19-20, 30).
  - b. "He who comes from above is above all... He bears witness to what he has seen and heard... For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure" (John 3:31-34).
3. Jesus ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - a. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).
  - b. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19).
  - c. "As he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal" (Luke 5:17).
  - d. "And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all. (Luke 6:19; see also Luke 8:43-48)

Jesus connected with the Father and the Spirit the same way we do, through prayer.

1. Jesus prayed privately.
  - a. "But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray" (Luke 5:16).
  - b. "In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles" (Luke 6:12-13).
2. Jesus prayed vocally.
  - a. "So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me'" (John 11:41-42; see also John 17:1-26).

## Part 2. Healing Prayer and the imagination

*"The dictionary defines imagination as the action of forming a mental image or concept of what is not present to the senses. Another definition denotes the imaginative faculty itself by which these images or concepts are formed. The third meaning refers to the power which the mind has of forming concepts beyond those derived from external objects (the productive imagination). This power refers not only to fancy but to creative or poetic genius, the power of framing new and striking intellectual conceptions"* (Leanne Payne, *The Healing Presence*, p. 164).

C.S. Lewis calls the imagination the chest: “*the liaison between cerebral man and visceral man.*” *This middle aspect is the human beings’ greatest strength. For it coordinates sense experiences, memories, knowledge, symbols, stories, and myths, all together into a meaningful whole. “It may be said that it is by this middle element that man is man; for by his intellect he is mere spirit and by his appetite mere animal” (The Abolition of Man, 1944).*

1. The language of the imagination is symbolic.
  - a. “Symbol is the key for the fusion of thought with feeling. The symbolic mind, working properly, brings together head and heart. What starts as a deliberate visualizing of the Cross becomes an intuition of the real. God sends his healing grace, a thing we could never have deliberately visualized” (Leanne Payne, *The Healing Presence*, p. 172).
  - b. “God sends us pictures and he sent us words. Pictures—that is, metaphor, symbol, myth, dreams, and visions—are a vital part of the language of the heart. We need to understand this symbolic language” (Leanne Payne, *The Healing Presence*, p. 171).
2. The imagination is necessary to express the gifts of the Spirit.
  - a. “The prophet’s mind is instructed by God in two ways: in one way by an express revelation, in another way by a most mysterious instinct to which the human mind is subjected without knowing it” (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, 2-2.171.5).
3. The imagination is formed through experience.
  - a. The Bible contains the Christian symbolic system and forms the Christian imagination.
  - b. The natural world forms and informs a person’s imagination.
  - c. Culture and the arts (history, literature, music, theater and so forth) form a person’s imagination.
4. The imagination can be ill-formed or harmed.
  - a. Pollutants and wounds
  - b. Demonic suggestions
  - c. Trauma
  - d. Mental illness
5. The imagination can be re-formed and healed.
  - a. “For every one pupil who needs to be guarded from a weak excess of sensibility there are three who need to be awakened from the slumber of cold vulgarity. The task... is not to cut down jungles but irrigate deserts” (C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*).
  - b. “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Philippians 4:8).
  - c. “You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you” (Isaiah 26:3).
  - d. Cleanse it?
  - e. Feed and cultivate it!
6. The imagination allows us to encounter the healing presence of Jesus and to minister his healing presence to others.
  - a. “No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you” (John 15:15-16).