



Imagination, Imaginaries, and the Christian Mind

with Dr. Karen Swallow Prior

Webinar Show Notes

Agenda

- A. Synopsis:** Christian culture is shaped by both individual imaginations and the collective pool of social imaginaries. Many of the unexamined assumptions that make up our social imaginaries drive our individual imaginations. This seminar will explore this interplay and give some examples of how this works from the art and literature that has shaped the evangelical social imaginary for the past 300 years.
- B. Personal Announcements:**
- Books: [The Evangelical Imagination](#) by Brazos Press
 - Speaking: Oct 5-6, Colorado Christian University; Oct. 8, Denver Lecture Series
- C. Main Goals Tonight:**
- Context for the making of the book
 - Learning to distinguish between the cultural and Christian imagination
 - Modernity and evangelicalism
- D. Q & A to follow**



TONIGHT'S OUTLINE

- I. Context for the book
 - a. The social imaginary's impact upon evangelicalism
 - b. The imagination is fueled by what we pay attention to and the assumptions we accept.
 - c. How the book came to be
- II. Learning to distinguish between the historical and biblical context of the Christian imagination
 - a. Definitions
 - b. Literary examples
 - c. Metaphors and stories
 - d. Questions that challenge our assumptions
- III. Modernity and its effects on the imagination
 - a. The danger of sentimentalism
 - b. Institutional abuses and continual reformation

Q & A

Some questions that were answered in the webinar

- What do you see as the role of imagination in the Christian life in a society that seems to be steadily moving away from both imaginative work (AI as a substitute) and becoming post-Christian?
- What role could imagination play in communicating the gospel in such a world?
- How do Christians separate what is cultural from what is Christian without “throwing out the baby with the bath water”?
- What is an effective mode for helping students to distinguish between the cultural and Christian imagination?



Encore Resources

Where you can find Karen Swallow Prior

I. Websites: [Karen Swallow Prior](#)

A. Social Media:

1. [Instagram](#): @karensallowprior
2. [Twitter/X](#): @KSPrior
3. [Facebook](#)
4. [Substack](#): @karensallowprior
5. [Contact Karen](#)

II. Karen's Resources

A. Books

1. [The Evangelical Imagination](#)
2. [On Reading Well](#)
3. [Find more books here](#)

B. Articles, Essays & Blogs

1. Book excerpt for [Scholé Communities Blog](#)
2. [How to Love Your Ideological Enemy](#) for *Christianity Today*
3. [Practice the Christian Virtue of Reading Promiscuously](#) for *The Gospel Coalition*
4. [Karen's Featured Articles](#)
5. [Karen's Stories with The Atlantic](#)

C. Podcast & Radio Interviews

1. [Jane & Jesus](#) on The Joshua Network
2. [Close Reads Podcast](#)
3. [How Does Literature Deepen Our Understanding of Scripture](#) for The Gospel Coalition Podcast
4. [Being Human](#) interview by Evangelical Alliance

III. Recommended Reading:

- A. [The Evangelical Imagination](#) by Karen Swallow Prior
- B. [On Reading Well](#) by Karen Swallow Prior
- C. [Modern Social Imaginaries](#) by Charles Taylor
- D. [Areopagitica](#) by John Milton, 1644
- E. [Church History](#) by Simonetta Carr



- F. [Spirit and Imagination](#) a Trinity Forum Reading
 - G. [Letter From Birmingham Jail](#) a Trinity Forum Reading
- IV. **Related Resources:**
- A. [Lausanne Movement](#)
 - B. [Always Ready: Answers to Tough Questions](#)
 - C. [The Trinity Forum](#)