



Scripture: Mark 14:32-36, Romans 8:14-17, Galatians 3:26–27

Hey everyone! I'm so glad you're here. Whether you came in excited or just barely dragged yourself through the door, I'm glad you made it.

Let me start with a simple question: what comes to mind when you hear the word "father"?

For some of you, the word "father" might bring to mind someone who was steady and present; someone who shows up to your games, gives you guidance, and makes you feel safe. But for others, it might stir up pain or confusion. Maybe your dad hasn't been there when you've needed him. Maybe he's been distant, critical, or just hard to understand. Maybe you never even knew your dad, and that absence still leaves questions. So, when someone stands up and says, "*God is your Father*," that can hit differently for each of us.

But today, I want us to look at that word—*Father*—through a different lens. What if God isn't like the dad you have or haven't had? What if He's far better? What if He's the most loving, committed, honest, and present Father you could ever know? How much would this impact your life? It would be HUGE!

That's what we're diving into tonight. We're going to look at what it means that God is our Father, not just in a religious way, but in a real, relational, personal way. And it all centers around one little word Jesus used: "Abba."

Let's pray together as we get started.

[Prayer]

Okay, a great place for us to start is Scripture, so let's open up to **Mark 14:32-36 (NIV)**. If you've got your Bible, flip there with me.

"They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,' he said to them. 'Stay here and keep

watch.' Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible, the hour might pass from him. 'Abba, Father,' he said, 'everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.'"

Let's pause here. Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane. He knew what was about to happen. He was about to be betrayed, arrested, beaten, and crucified. He was overwhelmed and this wasn't casual stress. This was agony. And in that moment, what did He say?

"Abba, Father."

Now, "Abba" is an Aramaic word. It's not a formal title like "Sir." It's not even just "Father." It's like saying "Dad" or even "Daddy." It's what little kids would say when they reached for their father's hand. And Jesus said it while crying out in pain. He didn't just call God "Sovereign Ruler" or "Mighty King" (even though He is those things). He called Him "Abba."

This was intimate. This was personal. This is what trust sounds like.

Here's what's amazing: because of Jesus, you and I can call God "Abba" too. We don't have to approach Him like He's some distant boss in the sky. We get to come to Him like a child runs to their dad; with tears, questions, joy, and honesty.

Now you may be wondering, how come we have that same privilege? I mean it made sense for Jesus, but how do I get to do that?

Let's turn now to **Romans 8:14-17 (NIV)**:

"For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

Okay, so this passage tells us how, through adoption.

When you are adopted, you are given full rights, full inheritance, full status. And Paul said that when we put our faith in Jesus, we are adopted into God's family. We're not just His followers. We become His sons and daughters.

You get everything a child deserves. Romans 8:17 says we become "co-heirs with Christ." We experience God's love, His promises and even eternal life. We're not outsiders anymore. We're family. Through Jesus, we've been adopted by God, brought into His household, and called His children.

But here's the thing; we don't always live like it's true.

Even though God says we belong, many of us still wrestle with the question: "*Who am I, really?*" And instead of answering that with what God says about us, we often go looking for identity in other places. We often build our identities based on what we do or what others say about us. But both of those foundations will eventually fail.

[This is a great place to insert a personal story; maybe a moment where you struggled with tying your identity to success, leadership, approval, or something else.]

If your identity is based on what you do, how well you perform, how successful you are, or how perfectly you fulfill a role, what happens when you mess up? As long as you're the good daughter, the respectful son, the strong leader, the athlete, the high-achieving student, everything seems fine. But when you fall short, and we all do at some point, you're left with shame. That shame leads to guilt, and guilt can quickly turn into a heavy weight that feels impossible to carry.

On the flip side, if your identity is based on who others say you should be—or even who *you* want to be—you'll constantly chase approval. You'll spend your energy trying to earn validation, and no matter how hard you try, it never feels like enough. That pursuit is exhausting. And it often leaves you feeling anxious, empty, and confused.

It's the same trap; it just looks slightly different. But thankfully, there's a better way. There's a third way; one that's not based on your performance or people's opinions. It's based on a promise.

This preview includes a select number of pages from this resource.

If you like what you see, download the entire resource today!

downloadyouthministry.com