

Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus



GOD IS ABBA TO JESUS—AND TO US

Why did Jesus call God *Abba*? What does it mean? What does it mean for us?

During this Easter season, we've been hearing about our adoption as God's sons and daughters. Jesus addressed God as Father and taught us to do the same. He called him *Abba*, which is even more familiar and intimate than the word *Father*. Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio explains why and how we have been invited into this close familial relationship with God.

Abba: What Does It Mean?

A clear expression of God's fatherly care toward Israel as a nation and toward its kings in particular is found in a number of places in the Old Testament. But Jews, in their prayers, did not address God directly as their personal father, even though they did use a formal term for father to respectfully address their superiors, including the king. Most languages also have informal words for mothers and fathers that children use when speaking with their parents. In American English, these are Mom and Dad.

In Aramaic and Hebrew, the informal, familiar form of address for one's father, used both by young and adult

children, is *Abba*. But for a Jew to address God as *Abba* in prayer was unheard of in ancient Israel. It would have struck a Jew as irreverent and presumptuous. Not only did Jesus address God this way in the Garden of Gethsemane, but he taught his disciples to do the same.

"And he said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible to you; remove this chalice from me; yet not what I will, but what you will.'" (Mark 14:36)

We can further grasp the importance of the word *Abba* to the early Christians by the several places where Mark and Paul, who wrote in Greek, remembered and preserved the word in the original Aramaic form that Christ spoke.

Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. Only he, by nature, can call God *Abba*. We dare to do likewise only because he has shared his sonship with us by his grace. He has allowed us to share his vision and experience of God from the vantage point of beloved sons and daughters. Walking in faith thus means walking as brothers and sisters in Christ, sons and daughters of the one Father, our Father.

“Daddy”

As his disciples, we are called to become like Christ, and Christ calls God “Daddy.”

Whoa.

We are to become like little children and place ourselves in relationship with God as his children. And not his adult children who are self-sufficient and have their parents at arm’s length. We are like his little children, completely dependent, vulnerable, and trusting.

Ponder and Pray

- What does it mean to you, as a grown person, to be a child of God?
- How do you address God in prayer? How can you become more spiritually intimate with him?

Make It Your Own

Pray with Romans 8:15. Look it up and read it over slowly and prayerfully. Pray an Our Father and then journal about what strikes your heart.

Dive Deeper

Scan the QR code to learn more:



Or go to: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2022/06/13/why-jesus-called-god-abba-and-what-it-means-for-us/>