



#5: ABBA'S CHILD

INTRODUCTION

Without question, one of the greatest distorted beliefs Christians carry is our image of the **Father**. Jesus showed us that without really knowing our Father—without experiencing Him as our **Abba** Father—then we don't really know God.

Jesus portrays His Father as extraordinarily generous and tender: a lender canceling debt, a shepherd seeking strays, a judge forgiving a tax collector. He is a generous forgiver not a hard-nosed condemner.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Romans 8:14-17; 1 John 4:16-18; Eph 1:4-5

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the image of God that first century Jews had? How did Jesus' teaching challenge that image?
2. What was your childhood experience with your dad? Did it influence your understanding of God as Father? Can you share an example of how this impacted your faith?
3. Our Heavenly Father loves us not because of what He finds in us. Rather, He initiates love. "His love is without motive" (B. Manning). Why does that matter? Is that comforting?
4. "Tenderness is what happens to you when you know you are deeply and sincerely liked by someone" (B. Manning). How has your Father God shown His tenderness towards you?
5. It gives your Father God pleasure to choose you, to adopt you (Eph 1:4-6). Do you really believe that? Does God enjoy you?
6. Your image of your Father God and your affectionate pursuit of Him shapes the kind of person you become. Can you describe how your understanding of, and affection for, your Heavenly Father shaped who you are today?

MOVING FORWARD

Your primary identity is not struggling sinner, it is Abba's child.