

Why Did Jesus Call God “Daddy”?

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What would you think of a grown man who walked around saying, “My daddy says this...my daddy says that...I only do what I see daddy doing, and I only speak what I hear daddy saying”? This is precisely the way our Savior spoke around everyone, including the respected religious leaders of His day. None of His hearers had uttered the word “daddy” since they were tots. *Jesus called God “Daddy” more than 170 times in the Gospels!*

Understanding “Abba”

The word for “daddy” was the Aramaic and Hebrew word *abba*. There was another word young children past the toddler stage called their paternal parent: *abinu*. In the more than 170 places in the Gospels where Jesus refers to God in the parental role, *He consistently calls Him “abba” each time*. Not even once did the Son of God refer to His Begetter as “abinu”! This is amazing when you stop and consider it. He used the toddler’s word for His Father. All the school age children in Israel called their fathers “*abinu*” and never “*abba*” (see [The Words of Jesus in the Original Aramaic](#) by Stephen Missick).

To be clear, let it be repeated that Jesus *always* called His Sender “Daddy” and never “Father”. Why don’t our English Bibles read “Daddy” in these numerous passages? *It rubbed our scholars the wrong way*. Let’s be honest. It rubs us the wrong way too.

Why is it that “Daddy God” offends us more than “Father God”? The answers (there are several) may surprise us but there is a more important question.

Was God Offended by “Abba”?

The important consideration is not how the numerous “Daddy” references affected men. The vital question is: *was God offended by this term?* Even the most religious Christian would have to affirm that no, evidently it did not offend Yahweh, the LORD God. An abundance of Scriptures leave no question as to whether Jesus pleased God, indeed, *fully pleased Him* like no one else ever has. For the sake of space I will not list these many references as I’m sure you know them.

One might consider Him a harmless idiosyncratic fellow, were it not for all those amazing, stupefying miracles He did. Israelites had always held to the miraculous as the litmus test of the veracity of their ancient, revered prophets. What they said came to pass. The miracles God wrought through Moses, Elijah, and others testified to Israelites of their leaders' legitimacy with the LORD. There were indisputable signs and wonders wrought through them. The "multitudes" that followed Jesus mostly came to see and receive the amazing miracles He performed. But once more this humble carpenter told them: "The miracles I do, I don't do. My Daddy who dwells in Me does these miracles" (John 14:10).

What angered the religious leaders most about Jesus' annoying habit of calling God "Daddy" was that this unlearned carpenter was not only disrespecting God, He was blaspheming Him! By calling Him "Abba" Jesus was claiming an intimacy with God that only a son could claim. He was claiming Sonship with Deity! This was brought up repeatedly at His trial and eventual crucifixion. It was unthinkable to Jewish leaders living at the time of Jesus that any man could be the Son of God, in the way Jesus was inferring with His repeated use of "Abba". True, all of Israel claimed God as their "Abinu" in the national collective sense. "Out of Egypt have I called My son" Yahweh had said through the prophets. His "son", they believed was the entire nation, not a particular individual.

None of the rabbis even taught that the long awaited Messiah would be God's Son. They were looking for a King, to be certain, indeed, one that would overthrow Rome, but a messiah of natural conception and birth. Jesus, and as His townsfolk in Nazareth knew, Jesus was not fathered by Joseph. In Mark 6:3 they referred to Him as "Mary's illegitimate son" in the Aramaic text. Only a few selected individuals knew the divine secret of Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit and virgin birth (**see Deut. 23:2**). Jesus lived with this undeserved stigma, and still does. Every time a minister denies the Virgin Birth he or she is calling Jesus illegitimate.

Jesus Instructed Us to Call God "Daddy"

Not only did Christ say "Daddy" but He taught His followers that when they prayed they were to begin by addressing God as "Daddy" too!

But why do we insist on calling God "Father" or "Our Father" when we pray? There are several reasons:

1. Our English translations say "Father" in their rendering of *abba*.
2. It seems childish that we would call God by such an undignified term. Perhaps a bit disrespectful to the religious mind?
3. We like to think of ourselves as growing children, like those in Israel who dropped "abba" for "abinu" to show that they were no longer babies or

- toddlers, but were getting too big for that word.
4. Some of our reluctance to even call God “Father” is due to the fact that we had a bad relationship with our fathers in childhood and still we are not healed.

Do You Verbalize “Daddy” When You Pray?

No one I’ve asked has answered yes. Now I am asking you. Do *you* pray to your Daddy? No? If not, why not?

Maybe you didn’t know what “abba” means, or maybe you were never taught until now that this was the only word Jesus used when addressing or speaking about the First Person of the Godhead.

Maybe you were distant from your earthly father...maybe he abandoned you, abused you, or caused you to fear him. Maybe he was a good man but was extremely busy, absent from home for stretches at a time, or if there you didn’t deeply connect with him. Maybe he only corrected you and rarely comforted you. If you have an inner aversion toward the Heavenly Father, or, excuse me, Heavenly Daddy, let this message encourage you to allow your Abba to “re-parent” you:

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery again to fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption by which we cry, Abba! Father!

Romans 8:15

Begin Addressing Your Father as *Daddy* in Your Prayer Times

Let the example of our Lord change the way you pray. When you are in prayer why not humbly call Him “Daddy”? Jesus did this. You can too. It may not be best if you call God “Daddy” in church. Stick with “Father” there for the time being until the church becomes more like Jesus, but when you are alone pray to *your Daddy in heaven*.

“Daddy, I love You.”

See yourself not as “a great man of God” or as “a mature believer” but instead *see yourself as a little child*. Jesus said that you and I must become like a little child if we wish to enter the Kingdom experientially (Matt. 18:1-8).

Here are some benefits to praying to “Daddy” like Jesus did:

1. You immediately sense a closeness and intimacy with God much deeper than when you call Him “Father”. Try this and you’ll agree.
2. Your sense of God’s care for you will deepen considerably.
3. Your sense of God’s “bigness” will enlarge immeasurably.
4. Your peace will increase.
5. Your prayers will be answered more quickly. (Yes, I’ve seen this in my life.)
6. Your God-connectedness will abide throughout your busy day.

7. You will sleep better. (No, I am not kidding.)

This list could go on for a full page.

Three Years Ago Something Wonderful Happened

In July of 2008 I was walking on a nature trail when a deep, warm voice instructed, "Sit on that rock." Since that day I've never had a problem. Or maybe I should say, a problem has never had me! My surface-life has continued with what people would call "problems" especially financial ones but they are lessening. But there has not been an INTERNAL problem, only peace. I know this sounds far-fetched but it's true. If I said otherwise I'd be lying and I'm a fellow whose entire life was plagued with problems. Rarely did I know a non-problematic day or situation. Everything was always going wrong. Frustration after frustration exasperated me even during "a good week". Retreating into prayer helped, but the peaceful feeling rarely lasted.

That all changed one beautiful day three summers ago. Ever since then, I have lived in deep peace, not once ever completely gone, despite all kinds of surface life events.

Sometimes it's like a little rippling brook that I hear in the background. Other times God's peace is like a deep river flowing in, around, and through this disciple.

What happened was that the "problem making me" dissolved and blew away.

When my senses returned after sitting on the rock, I was saying, "Papa, papa,

papa" over and over. Papa has been my personal word for the Father ever since, and Daddy has become the other name I call Him. It seems as natural as breathing.

You don't have to wait for a special touch from the Lord to experience the sweet blessedness by talking to your Daddy in your alone times.

I encourage you to begin practicing this most intimate of terms for the Almighty God.

You will be happy you did!

Please Notice

If you desire prayer, drop me a note. I will pray for you about any need in your life.

My heart flows out in love to the few of you who are keeping this ministry afloat with your prayerful giving.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

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