

Encounter with ABBA

Leading Families into the Arms of the Father

WELCOME TO ABBA!

Our team is grateful and excited for the opportunity to serve you and your family by leading you into the arms of the Father.

All throughout Jesus' earthly ministry as recorded in the New Testament, He addresses God as "Abba," which means "Father." It expressed a deeply intimate relationship with God. Rather than offering us a form of religion, Jesus came to offer us **relationship** with Abba. Jesus moves us from simply knowing about God, our Creator, to actually having a personal relationship with Abba, our Father. **More than ever our families need a fresh encounter with Abba!**

In just 4 weeks you will experience a *Weekend With Abba*. The following weekly devotionals will help spiritually prepare you and your family for an encounter with Abba. As you utilize these devotionals, we encourage you find a place and time where together you can learn and pray. Don't overthink it; don't over plan it; don't overdo it. Simple is better and, for now, a shorter amount of time will be more meaningful.

Our prayer is that these short devotionals will lay a foundation and begin opening the door for you and your family to encounter Abba's presence and run into His arms of love, grace, healing, forgiveness, and salvation.

We are praying for you and your family and believe that after the *Weekend With Abba* your family will throw open the door to Abba and embrace all that He has for you now and for generations to come.

See you in 4 weeks!

ABBA USA TEAM

ABBA is designed to impact children and youth by helping them actively engage in prayer, learn biblical truth, encounter God's love, and to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. We provide engaging resources and events that will impact the entire family, even providing parents with opportunities for reconciliation, renewal, and activation.

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Devotionals before a *Weekend With ABBA*



PRAYER IS

"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'" Matthew 6:9-13 (ESV)



RECEIVING

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8 (ESV)



ABUNDANTLY

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10 (ESV)



YES, FATHER!

"...but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God..." Romans 8:15-16 (ESV)

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Devotionals before a *Weekend With ABBA* WEEK 1

PRAYER IS

"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'" Matthew 6:9-13 (ESV)

Praying is not only talking to the Father, it is also listening to Him. It's just like a conversation with a friend. Over the next few weeks we want to help you and your family open the door to a life-giving friendship with the Father. This door is opened through the act of prayer; talking with God.

Anyone who plays a sport, a musical instrument, or any activity that takes skill knows that in order to get better at that skill you need to learn. You might have a coach or a teacher who will teach you the skill. It's no different with learning to pray! It's a skill to grow in. In fact, one day Jesus' own disciples came to Him and said, "Lord, teach us to pray." So, He did! The verse above is what we call the "Lord's Prayer Pattern." It is the model of prayer that Jesus taught His disciples on how to talk with the Father. Today, we still use this pattern of prayer!

There are 7 parts to the Lord's Prayer Pattern. Think of it like 7 rooms in the house of prayer. In a few weeks we will learn more about the Father's special house of prayer and these rooms where we can get to know Him better, but for now, the best prayer you and your family can pray is, "Lord, teach us to pray!"

Pray: Jesus we ask You to teach us to pray the same way You taught Your disciples. We don't want to just know **about** You, we want to grow in relationship **with** You! So, Jesus, be our coach; our teacher. We want to have an encounter with You and be filled with Your love and presence.

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Leading Families into the Arms of the Father

Devotionals before a *Weekend With ABBA* WEEK 2

RECEIVING

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8 (ESV)

What do you do when you have an important decision to make? Who do you turn to? What should we do in those moments?

Jesus said to, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." As we learn to pray the Lord's Prayer Pattern, our hearts come into alignment with the will of the Father. As that happens, we will begin caring about what **He** cares about, and He begins to care about what **we** care about. Jesus was teaching us that when we pursue the things that are on the Father's heart, we will receive what the Father wants us to have! He wants us to come to Him and pray about all of our needs, concerns, and decisions. He wants us to seek His will in all that we do, and knock on the door of the house of prayer. As we do, the owner of the house, the Father, will open up the door to us and a deep relationship will begin to grow.

We encourage you to spend some time as a family praying for the needs and desires that are on your hearts and on the Father's heart. Pray with an expectation that you will receive an answer. It may not be the exact answer you are looking for, but the Father knows what's best. At the very least, every time we knock on the door of the house of prayer we are sure to receive more of the Father's love, grace, mercy, forgiveness, peace, joy, and truth.

Are you ready to receive from Abba? Go for it! He is waiting for you and your family to receive from Him together.

Pray: Father, we thank You for Your promises that when we come into your house of prayer and ask, seek, and knock, You will answer. Help us to remember this everyday and in every situation we face. We come as a family today, Abba. We want to receive from You all that You have for us!

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Leading Families into the Arms of the Father

Devotionals before a *Weekend With ABBA* WEEK 3

ABUNDANTLY

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10 (ESV)

Did you know Jesus came to earth to give us an abundant life? No, not necessarily an abundance of toys and money, but an abundant spiritual life through an abundant relationship with our Creator, Abba! An abundant life comes as we grow in prayer. Even in hard times we can have an abundant life because we have a good Father!

In the Bible there is a story of a man named Peter. He was one of Jesus' disciples. Peter went to prison for telling people about Jesus. While he was there, he was well guarded, but many of Peter's friends were praying to the Father with great persistence. Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, while other soldiers were at the door guarding the prison. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and the prison was filled with light. The angel touched Peter on the side, woke him up, and said to him, "Get up at once!" Instantly the chains fell from Peter's hands, and the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and put on your sandals." Peter did so, and the angel added, "Put on your cloak and follow me." Peter followed the angel past the first guard and then the second, and when they came to the iron gate leading to the street, the gate opened of its own! Peter was miraculously free! He ran to the house where many of his friends were gathered together in prayer. Can you imagine that moment? Peter was in jail, but people were praying for him and he was set free.

Much like this story, Satan has come to harm our life and make us feel like we are in a prison. But Jesus has come so that we may have an abundant life full of freedom, peace, and joy. When we feel like we're alone and trapped in a prison, we need people praying for us like they were praying for Peter. Nothing is more powerful than being a family who prays together and for each other. It's part of how we experience the abundant life Jesus offers us.

Pray: Abba, thank you for sending Jesus to give us an abundant life! Please help us to grow in an abundant relationship with You! Continue to teach me how to talk and hear from You.

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Leading Families into the Arms of the Father

Devotionals before a *Weekend With ABBA* WEEK 4

YES, FATHER!

**"...but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'
The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God..."**

Romans 8:15-16 (ESV)

The name God chose for Himself was "Father." Jesus came to offer us a parent-child relationship with God. In other words, Jesus came to reconnect us to intimacy with Abba, Father. It's in this relationship with Abba that we can find His unconditional love. We are no longer alone, we are no longer spiritual orphans; we are part of a huge spiritual family. Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the dead to give us the right to call God "Abba!" He is waiting for us to run freely into His arms.

Remember how we've said several times that prayer is not only talking to Abba, but also listening to what Abba wants to say? Well, the Father speaks through His Holy Spirit and wants us to regularly let us know that we are His children, that He loves us, and that we belong to Him.

Sometimes it's hard to hear Abba speak because the noise of the world around us is too loud. If that's the case, it might be time to turn down the world's volume. Make time and find a space to get quiet and remove some of the distractions around you. Perhaps that means turning off your music or your TV. Consider reading the Bible, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the passages of Scripture you read (the Gospel of John is always a great book to begin with). If you like to draw, consider asking the Holy Spirit to give you a picture.

As you listen to what the Father wants to say to you, be ready to respond with a "Yes, Father!" This is a good way to let Abba know you're ready to do anything He asks of you, or to embrace the affirmation He gives you.

Pray: Father, thank You for Your love and desire to help us live as Your children. Thank You that we don't have to settle for only knowing *about* You, but that we can actually have a relationship *with* You! I want to hear You speak to my spirit, and I'm ready to say, "Yes, Father!"

Follow-up devotionals after a *Weekend With ABBA*



ADORE HIM

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker." Psalm 95:6 (KJV)



BE STILL

"Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10a (KJV)



BE INTENTIONAL

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20 (KJV)



ABIDE IN HIM

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." John 15:4 (ESV)

ABBA

Leading Families into the Arms of the Father

Follow-up devotionals after a *Weekend With ABBA* WEEK 1

ADORE HIM

**"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker."
Psalm 95:6 (KJV)**

It's been a week since we had our *Weekend With Abba* and we want all that we learned to continue in every home and in every family.

If you like smores, you know that the best way to enjoy them is over an outdoor fire. What do you need to start a fire? Firewood! That's why we want to encourage you to keep adoring Abba as a family. The word "adore" simply means to have a deep love and respect for someone or something. To show Abba we adore him means that we want to show him love and respect through our worship. Worship includes praying, singing, praising, reading the Bible, and other spiritual activities. All of these activities are like adding firewood to a fire so it burns bigger and brighter. *The more adoration we give Abba, the more of Him we will get!*

Our verse this week, Psalm 95:6, tells us to come and worship the Lord; to bow down and worship him. We can adore him by worshipping him as both our creator (maker) and as our Abba (father). You can practice right now by telling Abba how thankful you are for his love. Maybe you even have a song in your heart that you want to sing to him. Here's a simple way to start: "Father we worship you, we want more of you, we adore you!"

PRAY: Father, we thank you for all that we received from you last weekend. We come to you as a family and we want to worship you because you are worthy of praise! We want our home to be a house of prayer and full of adoration for you and your presence. We love you Abba!

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Follow-up devotionals after a *Weekend With ABBA* WEEK 2

BE STILL

"Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10a (KJV)

Has someone ever told you to "be still"? Most kids at some point are told to sit still in class, church, or somewhere that it's usually hard to stop moving around. But did you know God also tells us to be still? Psalm 46:10 encourages us to reflect on who God is taking time out of our daily routine and busyness so that we can meditate on scripture and be silent with listening ears and listen to what Abba might want to say to us.

We encourage you this week as a family to intentionally pause some part of your daily routine so that you can be still. As you pause, welcome Abba and invite him to speak. Listen to him and consider what he may be saying to you personally and as a family.

After you take time being still, share with each other what Abba might have said to you. Perhaps he gave you a picture, a verse from the Bible, or a specific word. Maybe he just told you how much he loves you!

PRAY: Abba we want to be still—we want to pause—we want to rest in your presence and in your arms of love. We want to know that only You are God. We want to listen to you and consider what you are saying to us this week. Teach us to wait quietly before you because in you we are safe and at peace. We love you Abba!



Leading Families into the Arms of the Father

Follow-up devotionals after a *Weekend With ABBA*
WEEK 3

BE INTENTIONAL

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Matthew 18:20 (KJV)

How has your prayer time been these last weeks? Did you know that Abba loves us to pray with our families? Seeking Him as a family is a great blessing and, at the same time, a great challenge. This week we want to encourage you to continue praying together if possible. Building a relationship with someone takes time and intentionality. It doesn't happen by accident.

The promise Jesus gave us in Matthew 18:20 is powerful. If you will intentionally gather together with your family and/or others, and do so with the intention of encountering Christ, He promises He will join us!

PRAY: Abba, we want to run into Your presence this week, and we claim this promise that You will be there with us! Help us to be intentional and consistent in our desire to be with You.

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Follow-up devotionals after a *Weekend With ABBA*

WEEK 4

ABIDE IN HIM

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." John 15:4 (ESV)

These last few weeks we have seen the importance of learning how to pray and how to enjoying worshipping Abba. These are part of the ways that we abide, or grow in relationship with, the Father. be still and to know that he is God, be intentional seeking God with our family because He has promised to be in the midst, and this week we encourage you to abide in him.

Jesus knew how important it was for His disciples to be rooted in their relationship with Abba. Using the familiar symbol of a vine and its branches, Jesus identified Himself as the true vine. He wants us to be fruitful branches, and that only happens as we learn to abide in the Father by pursuing a life-giving relationship with Him through worship and prayer. Every time we spend time talking with Abba, worshipping Him, and getting to know Him by reading the Bible, its like we water the vine so the branches can grow bigger and stronger.

PRAY: Abba, we want to abide in Your presence, abide in Your Word, and abide in Your love and light! Help us to know you more. I confess there are many distractions in my life. Give me the strength to stay focused on my relationship with You, and to learn to find peace, hope, and love in our relationship.