



Q1: Lesson 5

Who's Your Daddy?



INSTRUCTIONS

How to Use This Digging Deeper Exercise

STEP 1 – Download the PDF

You've probably already done this, but just in case you haven't, download this PDF to your computer. You'll need a PDF reader on your computer or device. We recommend Adobe Reader (it's free).

STEP 2 – Read Through the Entire Exercise First

Before engaging in this Digging Deeper Exercise, read through it first, at least once. Make sure that you understand everything before beginning.

STEP 3 – Write it Down

As always, journal the things you are hearing from God. Remember, you can journal electronically, in a journal, or however you want. The point is to make sure that you write things down.

STEP 4 – Trust You Are Hearing God

The goal of the Q1 Digging Deeper Exercises is to strengthen your relationship with God and improve your ability to communicate with him. Sometimes you may wonder if what you are writing in your journal or what you are experiencing or thinking about during these exercises is really God. Don't overthink it. Trust that Holy Spirit is communing with and speaking to you. Don't get stuck wondering if you're really experiencing God. Just trust the process and follow the instructions. Answer the questions, engage your imagination, and do your best. God is with you every step of the way!

STEP 5 - Ask for Help if Needed

If you are having technical trouble or feeling stuck, email us at admin@emergesot.com before you get too far down the path. We want you spending your time hearing God and discovering awesome things about him, not struggling with techie stuff. If you find yourself at a place where you're having trouble hearing and experiencing God or you're hitting a spiritual or emotional roadblock, then really, most definitely, reach out to us and let us know. We have a team of facilitators and coaches that are available to help you get past whatever might be hindering you from moving forward.





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INTRODUCTION

Reconnecting with Your Childhood

In Matthew 18:3, we are told by Jesus that unless we “change our minds” and become like little children we will never enter the kingdom of God. Then in 1 Corinthians 13:11, Paul speaks of “putting away childish things.” This seems like a contradiction of sorts, but really it’s speaking of two very important aspects of our relationship with God.

When Jesus speaks of changing and becoming like children, he is referring to a restoration of our ability to experience and enjoy life while trusting and depending on him like a little child does their parents. He’s saying that unless you can behave in the same carefree way a child does, you won’t experience his kingdom. Becoming as little children means that we live from a place of childlike dependency on our Heavenly Father with the innocence, trust, wonder, awe, joy, sensitivity, imaginativeness, and playfulness of a child.

However most of us, even if we became Christians at an early age, weren’t taught how to connect to God as Father in practical and meaningful ways. We didn’t learn how to hear God’s voice or experience his unconditional love, acceptance, and approval. We also didn’t know how to identify ourselves as in Christ or understand that our Heavenly Father’s opinions and identity for us were who we truly were. Instead we developed our own ideas, some good, some bad, about God and ourselves.

Paul, when he speaks of putting away childish things, is talking about a process of repentance and healing. This includes releasing the false identities that we formed apart from Christ growing up and receiving healing for childhood hurts. Us “grown-ups” are usually convinced we have successfully outgrown, jettisoned, and left our childhood and its emotional baggage long behind. But, this is rarely the case and far from the truth. So many of our behavioral, emotional, and relationship issues stem from unresolved childhood issues and the ungodly ways we were “wired” to think as children. Furthermore, our lack of conscious awareness of how much our childhood is still impacting us is a real hindrance to freedom and wholeness.

By the way, it wasn’t that our parents, teachers, friends, and others meant to program us wrongly; it is just the way the world works for the most part. We live in a fallen world. As a result, we are taught to think and behave in ways that limit the power of God in most situations and trap us in the natural realm. As adults we end up living our lives mostly oblivious to the spiritual realm and the presence of God in our lives.

It is for these reasons that it is so important to learn to connect with God as Father and how to come to him as a little child for comfort, healing, and truth. As we do, our accumulated childhood hurts, rejections, traumas, fears, and wrong beliefs about ourselves and can be brought out into the light and transformed by our Father’s love.

EXERCISE 1 – FORGIVING OUR NATURAL FATHERS

Does God as a loving Father who is actively involved in your life feel like a foreign concept to you? If so, you’re not alone. Many people struggle to relate to God as Abba, their Daddy, in an intimate way where they feel safe, unconditionally loved, and encouraged in their relationship with him.

Most of the time, whether we consciously recognize it or not, our ability or inability to connect with God as Father stems from our relationship with our natural fathers, especially growing up. Those who struggle to trust God as their very own Abba Father, typically do so because of unhealed hurts from





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their childhood, particularly their relationship (or lack of one) with their natural father. But, even if you feel as though your relationship with your dad growing up was great, even the best father on the planet falls short of the perfect love of our Heavenly Father.

So, with this in mind, in this 1st exercise, we are going to take an important step towards connecting with God as Father in a deeper and more meaningful way by forgiving our natural fathers for any way they might have fallen short of representing God's perfect love to us.

It's important to remember for purposes of this exercise, that forgiveness is not the same thing as saying what happened is okay. Forgiving someone also doesn't mean that you have to let the person back into perfect relational standing with you.

Forgiveness is always about you. It's about you releasing the pain of what happened so that you feel at peace. Reconciliation after forgiveness is an entirely different matter. That is something that may or may not happen depending on the other person's ability to be in a healthy relationship with you.

As we pray the following prayer of forgiveness for your dad, keep in mind, we are not dishonoring your father in anyway, but rather simply acknowledging that he was imperfect, like all of us. We are simply forgiving him for whatever ways he misrepresented God's perfect love. This includes ways he may have interacted and related with you that were not how God interacts and relates to you. It also includes things that your dad should have done to accurately represent God's love, but didn't, or didn't even know he should, do. Really we are forgiving your dad for anything that negatively impacted your image of God as Father or has hindered your ability to receive his perfect love.

Begin by praying the following prayer out loud when you are ready.

Father God,

I choose by an act of my will to forgive my dad for being an imperfect father who helped shaped an inaccurate image of you as my Abba Daddy.

- For acting in ways that were not like you
- For saying things that were not from you
- And for treating me in ways that were not like you

I also forgive my dad for not doing and saying things he should have, things that would have painted a more accurate image of who you are on my heart.

Specifically, I forgive my dad for _____.
(list anything and everything that comes to mind)

I release these things to you Lord along with the hurt and pain and _____ they caused. I release them and let them go. (other emotions)

In Jesus' name, I renounce the lie that you look just like my dad. Holy Spirit, I ask you to smash my distorted image of the Father that was built as a result of my dad's imperfections. Tear down every wall that has kept me from experiencing my Abba Daddy and his perfect love. Reveal the Father in spirit and in truth. Show me who he is and how much I am loved.





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Take back the ground in my life that the enemy has had access to as a result of these things. Shut every door and lock every gate.

In Jesus name I pray, AMEN!

EXERCISE 2 – PRAYING WITH CRAYONS

In this exercise, you are going to do something you probably haven't done in awhile – use crayons! What? Yes, crayons! In this exercise we are going to write a letter (a prayer) to your heavenly Father in your journal using crayons. You might just even draw a few pictures!

Sometimes we need to try something new when we are seeking a breakthrough in our relationship with God. Using crayons, while it may seem a bit silly, is actually a powerful yet simple step of faith you can take to “become like a little child” in your relationship with God.

So go ahead, get wild, pick up some crayons and start writing and drawing in your journal. Write a letter to your Abba Daddy expressing your desire to get to know him better as Father. Talk to him as if he were really sitting in your room. Tell him how you really feel. Be honest. If you have questions, ask them.

Then draw whatever comes to mind. You might want to draw something that represents your relationship with your Abba Daddy, such as the two of you walking hand in hand. Don't worry about the quality of your picture, stick figures will do. The power lies in getting the picture down on paper. There's something powerful that happens through the medium of art. Even if it's crayon art.

When you're finished with your drawings, don't forget to spend some time listening. As you listen, write down whatever you are hearing, trusting that your heavenly Father is speaking.





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EXERCISE 3 – EXPERIENCING YOUR ABBA DADDY'S LOVE

Worship is one of the most powerful things in the universe. It turns our attention towards God and supernaturally ushers his manifest presence into our lives.

For this exercise, you are going to need to connect to Youtube and listen to a song about the Father's love called "Good Good Father," by Pat Barrett and Anthony Brown. Your assignment is to learn the song and spend time in worship, singing it over yourself and to your Abba Daddy, at least 3 times (about 30 minutes) every day for the next 7 days.

I also encourage you to engage your imagination as your worship. Visualize yourself singing the song in your Father's ear or skip along with him holding his hand as you sing. Get creative and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal the Father's love to you however he chooses.

Here's the link on YouTube to the video, https://youtu.be/djrY_eFDOWE, and here's the song lyrics to help you learn it:

Oh, I've heard a thousand stories of what they think you're like
but I've heard the tender whisper
of love in the dead of night
You tell me that you're pleased
and that I'm never alone

You're a Good, Good Father
It's who you are, It's who you are, It's who you are
And, I'm loved by you
It's who I am, It's who I am, It's who I am

I've seen many searching for answers far and wide
But I know we're all searching for answers only you provide
Because you know just what we need before we say a word

You are perfect in all of your ways
You are perfect in all of your ways
You are perfect in all of your ways to us

Oh it's Love so undeniable, I, I can hardly speak
Peace so unexplainable, I, I can hardly think
As you call me deeper still,
As you call me deeper still,
As you call me deeper still into Love, Love, Love.

EXERCISE 4 – ABBA BREATHING PRAYER

In this exercise, we are going to continue to expand and grow our prayer life using a type of prayer called "breathing prayer." Breathing prayer is simply engaging the Holy Spirit, who dwells within you and is the breath of life, as you pray a scripture.

For this prayer, we will be using Romans 8:15 (NLT) which says... "So you have not received a spirit that





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makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.'"

Our "breath prayer" from Romans 8:15 is based on Brennan Manning's simple "Abba, I belong to you" prayer that has brought the healing love of the Father to countless wounded people. Brennan's story of how the Breath Prayer that God gave him healed his heart is amazing. Since being abused and abandoned by his alcoholic father as a boy, he had suffered from crippling shame, insecurity, and addiction. But breathing in and out his "Abba, I belong to you" contemplative prayer helped him to develop a secure identity as the beloved child of his Abba Father. To read Brennan's full testimony, see his book, *Abba's Child*.

The focus of this prayer will be to simply say the words "Abba, I belong to you" as you breath in the presence of Abba around you and breathe out the presence of Abba within you. The specific rhythm for this prayer is as follows:

1. Breath in the presence of Abba around you as you whisper "Abba"
2. Hold your breath and imagine yourself being cradled in your Heavenly Father's arms
3. Exhale the presence of Abba within praying softly "I belong to you"

To assist you in experiencing the Father's presence, I encourage you to play the song "Abba," by Jonathan David Hesler in the background. Here's the link to the YouTube video, <https://youtu.be/-GeVf1XQOPg>.

