

# Coach House Church

# BEACONS

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## ABBA - THE SONG OF RELATIONSHIP

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18TH MARCH 2021

'Mamma Mia', here I go again. These beacons come round quite frequently, so thank you for another opportunity that I have for you to 'take a chance on me'. Being an encouragement is the 'name of the game' and its definitely not about the 'money, money, money'. It's more about 'knowing me, knowing you' but ultimately knowing God.

Hopefully this isn't my 'waterloo' and you are a 'super trouper' as you listen to my rambling as you 'Gimme gimme gimme' your time and attention and 'lay all your love on me'. So, stop your 'dancing, queen', make sure the phone doesn't 'ring ring, ring', grab a cuppa, settle back, because 'the winner takes it all' and it is my hope that you don't think I'm going 'on and on and on'!

Ok, that was a strange opening paragraph, but I'm sure that you will have realised that I was trying to list as many songs as I could within the confines of the opening.

The question is – which band sang all the songs hidden in there?

Voulez vous? Or in English 'Do you want' to know?

Of course, the group is Sweden's greatest export – although some would put IKEA up there today – it is of course ABBA. The band famous for winning the Eurovision song contest and then creating hit after hit in the 70's and 80's.

The name Abba comes from the initials of the band members, Agnetha, Bjorn, Benny and Annifred.

I have a bit of a confession to make. Even through my permed hair days as a rock devotee, there was a stranger in amongst the Status Quo, Queen, Magnum and Uriah Heep albums in my vinyl collection. It was called Arrival and it was by Abba! - and I loved it. Even today one of the songs off that album called 'Eagle' is one of my favourite tunes.

Yes folks! I rather like the catchy music, the harmonies and the accessibility of the Swedish superstars. I think I'm a closet Abba fan!

When I think of Abba nowadays though, it isn't the thought of the Swedish songsters that comes to mind. It is the fact that I can I have the right to come to God and call him 'Abba Father'

Romans 8:15 (NLT)

So, you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."

Now, I'm not sure about you, but when I read this for the first time, it made little or no sense to me. But that is because I did not know the Aramaic expression being used or what it was implying.

One of the greatest promises and privileges that we have as followers of Jesus, is captured in the book Paul wrote to the Roman Christians. Most of chapter 8 is concerned with our standing with God once we have accepted Jesus as our saviour. The chapter talks about our adoption into God's family. We were outside, we were orphans, separated from God's protection and promises. We were in short – God's enemies.

But here is the incredible reality that Paul states. Belief in Jesus, makes us children of God. Being children of God by its very nature, makes God our Father.

Remember how Jesus taught his disciple to pray?

'Our Father, who art in heaven...' We recognise it as the Lord's prayer, but it is the intimacy of the phrase which often passes us by. Why does God listen to us? Why He is even interested in our prayers? It is because we are his children and He is our father.

When Paul uses the expression 'Abba Father', we are invited to understand something that is deeper and beyond perhaps our comprehension of the word father. Maybe the believers, still thought of God as a distant, unforgiving force, beyond their ability to have a close relationship with? Paul uses the word ABBA to demonstrate a beautiful, close, personal and intimate relationship with a creator God, who has expressed His great love for us by sending His own son, Jesus, to pay the price of our sin.

God set out to make us friends of God rather than His enemies. God puts everything in place and provides all we need to have real family relationship.

It is perhaps a limitation of the English language that the Aramaic term ABBA has to be used to help us understand the closeness and intimacy that we actually have with God. It denotes a closeness of relationship akin to the word 'daddy' although this is not the meaning of the word and can be used wrongly today. It is used simply to show us the intimacy that we now have – we have

complete restoration into God's family. We have sonship and rights because of God's provision for us.

God, in His great mercy has contrived to give us inheritance and the rights and privileges that a human son would benefit from. If you view the provisions that God set out for His people Israel in the Old Testament, it is obvious how much care and protection is given to them, under the terms of various covenants.

The sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus provides for us, in the words of Jesus himself, a new covenant. A new promise, a new provision.

Paul in his letter to the Romans, sets out our relationship status with God. He begins by telling us we are no longer Slaves, but we are now free. Free from sin and the curse of it – death. That in itself is amazing, but it doesn't stop there.

Paul wants us to know that our forgiveness of sin, our freedom from its curse, opens up the way for much more.

Sin was the blockage that was in the way of our relationship with God. It literally separated us from Him. Now sin has been forgiven and our relationship has been restored – but perhaps more fully and more beautifully than we realise. We are fully brought into God's family. We have the rights that sons would have as heirs and co-heirs. We have been given an undeserved inheritance. Living with Our Father for all eternity. What an inheritance!

We were orphans, stripped of any inheritance, cut off and yet we now have an even greater gift given to us.

Abba father, My father, Our father.

I may have kept my love of Abba a bit of a secret, but I can't help but tell people of my love for Abba Father.

I pray that you will know the closeness and love of God in your life.



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