

## How do you find a spiritual father? (Part 1)

- All right, how you guys, Pastor Mark here with the Real Men sermon series on 1 Timothy, Good Fight. And actually the first sermon is so long. It's basically a talk. I sat in the chair, you get what you pay for, it's free. Sat in the chair and start a verbal processing. So the first talk is a full introduction to 1 Timothy and his relationship with Paul. The second one is Find a Father. It's the first of 12 commands in 1 Timothy, and it's talking about either honoring the father you have, or finding the spiritual father that you need. All right guys, Real Men. First week in 1 Timothy, we're calling the series Good Fight. And we're just gonna go verse by verse through the great New Testament book of 1 Timothy, where there's the legendary leader, the Apostle Paul, he's in investing in and coaching up a younger man named Timothy. And really the big theme is at the end of the book, he says, "Man of God, fight the good fight." And so the whole point of this time together is to help you become a man of God and learn how to fight and fight a good fight. The world is lost, its mind. Everything is against godly masculinity, especially spirit filled, Jesus loving Bible thumping dudes. And so we're here to build men up to bless women and children. That's what we do at Real Faith. And normally I take the summer off, but this summer we're gonna do 12 weeks in 1 Timothy, it's 12 actually commands to become a man of God, ready to fight a good fight. And the reason I'm doing this is Real Men was a tremendous success this year. 100,000 of you a week joined us online churches, small groups, individual men all over the country and world. In addition to a packed house at Trinity Church, if you think about it, pray for us, we don't fit. I've gotta figure out how to get more men into our times together. But we'll do this informally, just kind of conversationally, a lot of verbal processing. And I will just sit here in front of the camera through the course of the summer and share some stuff that I share, quite frankly with my own sons. I've got three boys, 17, gonna be a senior in high school, 21, just graduated from college, engaged and get married this fall. And 23, married to his middle school sweetheart with my first grandson, first grandchild on the way this summer, our oldest daughter is also married and they're expecting their first child also a grandson this fall. And I've got one other daughter who's in college. So some of this is stuff that I tell my own sons and son-in-law and will tell my own grandsons. And so yeah, we are gonna jump in today. Command number one, talk number one, like I said, we'll do 12. And the first command is find a father. And we're gonna jump into 1 Timothy 1:1-2. But first, let me set it up. The main characters in the storyline of 1 Timothy, obviously the Apostle Paul, great legend, wrote 13 or 14 books of the Bible, depending upon who you think wrote the book of Hebrews. And he starts off as a religious dude. And let me say this, religious dudes are the worst. You dudes who are religious, meaning you're law based, not grace based. You think that all of God's commands are binoculars to inspect everyone else and not a mirror to examine yourself, you put heavy burdens and legalisms and traditions and rules and pressures and expectations. Religious dudes are the worst. Religious dudes crucified Christ. And so you need to know that religion is a problem, not a solution. Now, a life-giving spirit-filled Bible-based relationship with Jesus Christ, well that's not religion, that's redemption. And the difference between religion and redemption is simple, a lot of times religious people, they're not redeemed, and as a result, they just ruin everyone and everything. That's the Apostle Paul. He shows up in Acts 7. He's a religious jihadist. He's present overseeing the murder of the early church leader, Stephen. He is strong, he is bold, he is courageous, he is fearless. And those aren't bad things unless they're misdirected. And so you

just need to know that sometimes the worst parts of a man are his strengths misdirected. When we were raising our boys, my wife Grace, she didn't grow up with brothers. And so the boys were a bit of a mystery to her. She'd be like, "Man, they're loud. They have a lot of energy, they're very aggressive, they tend to wrestle a lot. They don't wanna wear their shirts, they pee in the yard." She grew up with sisters. This was all new. I said, "Well, just welcome to an off the rack standard, heterosexual young man." She said, "Well, how do we get them to not be like this?" I said, "No, no, no. What we don't wanna do is take away who they are. We want to direct who God made them to be." Usually what's true of a little boy is true of a big man. The worst parts of their life are their strengths misdirected. Paul's strong, courageous, bold, smart, fearless, doesn't mind conflict. Those are great things if you're serving Jesus, those are deadly things if you're not. So I told my wife with our boys, she came home one day and she's like, "Man, the son's given me quite a run. He's got a lot of energy, bit stubborn, strong, strong willed, determined." And I said, "Well, that's not a problem. We just need to get it all going the right direction. If he does that for Jesus, he's gonna be a force for good." This is what God the Father is doing with Saul. Saul's a bad religious dude, but his strength and his courage and his insight and his intellect could be redirected. So God doesn't wanna ruin you, he wants to redirect you. And we see in Saul the power of a man. The most powerful thing on the earth is a man. And the only thing more powerful than a man, as you'll see, is the gospel of Jesus Christ. But the strength of Paul is on full display. His name was Saul changes its Paul in Acts 8, where it uses the words execution, persecution, scattered, ravaging the church and dragged men and women to prison to explain what kind of dude he was. He was a problem. And sometimes men do the worst evil when they do it in the name of the Lord and the name of religion. In Acts 9:1, it says, "Saul still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord." He's the Osama bin Laden of his day. He is a dangerous jihadist and religious terrorist. And then in Acts 9, Jesus comes down. I told you the strongest thing on earth is a man. That's why we need to get the men. We don't need men to be weak. We need 'em to be strong. We don't need 'em to be cowards. We need 'em to be courageous. We know that evil won't stop itself and so good men need to get in the way. That's exactly what Jesus does. He comes down from heaven and he literally knocks all off his high horse. He blinds him. Saul had been spiritually blind. Now he's physically blind. He's humbled and humiliated. Let me tell you this, no dude ever fought Jesus and won. Jesus is undefeated. And every once in a while he comes down from heaven and he takes care of the tough guys all by himself. Well, then he gets saved. He becomes not a murderer, but a pastor and there's an initial suspicion like, can we trust this dude? Is he just trying to infiltrate our ranks so he can gut us? He had a genuine heart change. The only thing stronger than a man is the gospel. Don't give up hope for your dad. The tough guys, the bullies, the thugs. If Jesus gets ahold of him, all that strength could be used in a really beautiful way. He goes on to about a decade of ministry. He walks upwards of 20 miles a day. He's single. Never had the pleasure of a wife. I don't know how he made it without a wife, without my wife, Grace, everything would be different and nothing would be better. Doesn't have any biological kids. He's oftentimes poor. He's working side jobs. He starts riots, spends time in prison, writes books of the Bible from jail. Dude lived quite a life. He is a legend among legends. Here's how he explains his life. 2 Corinthians 6:4-10, "Afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, sleepless nights, hunger, slander treated as imposters, dying, punished,

sorrowful, poor, having nothing." And in 2 Corinthians 11, "Stripes above measure, that's flogging like they did to Jesus in prison, five times 40 stripes minus one." They said that usually a man would die at 40. So five times he got 39, 2 times beaten with rod, stoned, three times shipwrecked a night and day. I've been in the deep, literally adrift in the sea. Perils of waters, robbers, perils of my own countrymen and gentiles. Everybody hated this dude. Perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils in the sea, perils among the false brethren. There's always some false believers, some Judaism in the church, weariness, toil, sleeplessness, often hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness and by deep concern for all the churches. There's gotten out to be this rumor that to be a Christian as Spurgeon, the old pastor said, you need to sink your manliness. But unless you're just a really weak, soft, woke, effeminate, wahabi and beta male, you're not a good Christian. Paul was a dude of dudes. And we need more dudes like Paul, willing to have the mental head-on collisions, the physical confrontations to enter into the public sphere and to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. And what's interesting about Paul, since he never married and had children, as far as we could tell, at least he wasn't married. He may have married earlier, he was a member of a religious group, a really prestigious religious group, a really serious devout religious group called the Sanhedrin. And he was also of the Pharisee party, which was like a religious political party. But to be part of the Sanhedrin, you had to be married. Well, we know in the New Testament there's no wife and kids. And so what may have happened is he may have been married, he may have been widowed, and or when he converted to Christianity, if his wife didn't convert, she would've left him and abandoned him because of his zeal for Christ. Nonetheless, by the time we meet him, when he writes 1 Timothy, he has no wife and he has no kids, but he does have a father's heart. And what's really important is for all men to have a father's heart. And the older you get, the more you need to have a father's heart. I'm 52, more and more I have a father's heart. I wanna help build up, train up young men, love and treat them like my own sons and my son-in-law. The other guy in the story is Timothy. He lived in an area in the Bible called Lystra and Derbe. If you grew up in an area where there were two small towns that kind of bled together, it was like that. The first time him and Paul sort of intersected was in Acts Chapter 14, Paul, on one of his missionary journeys, he visits that region and he preaches and they stone him, literally throw rocks at him, drag him outside of the city and they think he's dead. Paul's so tough, he somehow bounces back, heals up, goes back into ministry. He goes back into that town a little while later in Acts Chapter 16, I don't know about you. If dudes tried to kill me, drug me outside of town and left me by the side of the road, I'd probably just pray for him and not come back for round two, dude gets off the chair, chin down, hands up back into the fight, that's Paul. "Elijah Buck." It's coming out, super excited. Been working on this for a long time. And this is probably the most controversial, culturally relevant, insightful, prophetic, Holy Spirit meets demonic mind diaper kind of content I've ever prepared. I'll give you the subtitle. It's too long to even remember. It's a study of Elijah, sex, gender, ancient paganism masquerading as progressive Christianity. Victims of nothing, woke politics, the transgender, Jezebel spirit, the castrates men in the past, beha soft book, Christian beta male spirit leading the conga line to shield, carrying a rainbow flag. If I haven't offended you yet, get the book, I'm gonna give it my best shot. Here's where it started. I was getting ready to teach a series from 1 and 2 Kings on the life of an ancient prophet Elijah. And sat down and over the course of, I don't even remember a day or two, I just

was praying and verbal processing and seeing things and taking almost three decades of Bible teaching. And before it was all said and done, I accidentally wrote a book. I think it's the most incredible thing I've ever written. I was learning things while writing it. The Holy Spirit was involved in a supernatural way that I don't fully understand. My wife Grace kept coming over. We were supposed to be on break, it was after Christmas. She's like, "Are you all right?" I said, "Yeah, I'm just in a weird zone. A rain man meets a haunted house, meets demons, meets Holy Spirit meets Old Testament kind of lane and we're just gonna give it away." I know nobody's gonna publish it, because you know it's not safe for the whole family. In fact, don't let your kids read it. They'll be up all night but it is an insight. And the principle behind the book, it's in conjunction with the sermon series that I'm doing, which thank you for helping get the word out. It's the most popular sermon series I've ever done, is that we have new days, but we have old demons. And that what we're seeing today with corrupt government, men who are like Ahab, they're passive and cowardly and soft and weak and woke. And women who are like Jezebel, domineering, overbearing, controlling, sexual, manipulative, dangerous and violent would still say that they're the victims. We're also seeing in our day transgenderism, castration of men. Jezebel, we were told, was surrounded by her Unix. And so I got into a deep dive study and what I was able to do is connect 3000 years ago with today. And what we're seeing is different people, but the same activities and the same beliefs because working behind the scenes are the same demons. So what we're gonna do in the book, we're not gonna just look at the life of Elijah, we're gonna look through it into our present. We're gonna assume that the Bible is not old, that it's eternal. And because it's timeless, it's always timely. And what we're going to do is we're gonna peel back the demonic veil on what's really happening in Western culture. And the whole prayer and goal is that you would become like Elijah filled with the Holy Spirit, that you would know how to take a stand and to take the shots and call the shots for the kingdom of God that you'd be able to wisely lead your life and lead your family. And if you're a ministry leader, lead your ministry into the purposes of God. You can find everything at [realfaith.com](http://realfaith.com), Daily Devotions, the Sermons, the Real Men talks, and also the study guide. And now "The Elijah" full book. It's coming in around 60,000 words. Or you can text the word fire to 99383. That's again, text the word fire to 99383. I'm not getting paid for this. I wrote it. I'm proud of it. I'm giving it away. Any gift you want to give goes into Real Faith Ministry helps me get Bible teaching out. Honestly, I just want to get this message out. I think it's a prophetic word for pathetic days. Can you imagine Paul today? I mean we have such a soft generation. Everybody just gets emotionally triggered by just the most minor of things. This dude is resilient, relentless. He is an unstoppable force. He goes back into town, preaches some more. And what happens is at that time, Timothy starts joining his ministry and following him, Timothy's gotta have some courage in him. If the first time the dude came to town, they stoned him and left him for dead. Second time he comes up, you volunteer to be part of what he's doing. You're a pretty tough dude. In addition, Timothy's mom was Jewish, his dad was gentile. Probably doesn't mean they were devout family growing up in any regard, but he was uncircumcised. So Timothy, imagine this. Imagine if to join a ministry, let's say you wanna be an intern at your church, the first thing they have to do is circumcise you. I'd be like, "Man, I'm good. I'm gonna go get a job at Costco where they don't circumcise me." Timothy gets circumcised to join Paul's ministry so that as they go into the Jewish communities, he would be welcomed since his mother was Jewish and he was

circumcised, he would've been accepted. His mother and father are not mentioned together. All we hear about is his grandmother and mother. It may mean that his parents got divorced or his dad died. But like many of you, many young men today, it seems like he came from a fatherless home. And so Paul becomes something of a spiritual father. It says in 2 Timothy 1:3-5, Paul says, "I remember you constantly in my prayers day and night, second father, son, I am reminded of your sincere faith, the face of faith, rather that dwell first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and now I am sure dwells in you as well." This is an ancient story, but it's very contemporary. Seems like a single mom and a grandma raising a young man, bringing him to the church, giving him Bible teaching, praying with him, introducing him to the Lord. But he doesn't have a father or a father figure in his life. And so then a godly man steps into that role. One thing I wanna point out too, between Paul and Timothy, kind of the father and son, there's a difference between, there's two kinds of leaders. I've said this for years. There's thought leaders and people, leaders. Thought leaders, they like to study and research and get degrees and deal with theology or money or culture or trends and ideas. People, leaders are more relational. They're more building teams and deploying people, doing counseling, pastoral care. And part of the reason that Paul and Timothy work so well together, and he's deployed to Ephesus, which is a a big strategic city for ministry. And it is reported that early on Jesus' own mother was there. Luke was there for a season. It was really a central location for ministry and for sending people out into other areas. And so Paul deploys him there 'cause he can trust him. But Paul's more of a thought leader. Timothy's more of a people leader. I'll explain this. Paul studied under the renowned Rabban Gamaliel in Acts 22. He was fluent in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and possibly Latin. Dude is bright and well-educated. His letters include over a hundred Old Testament quotations in addition to numerous echoes and themes. He's often traveling. He's writing some books of the Bible from prison. So he's pulling a lot of this from memory. He's an incredibly high IQ and intellect. As we said. He wrote 13 or 14 books of the New Testament over the course of 15 years to seven churches and two in individuals. He writes books of the Bible. And 2 Peter 3:15-17, Peter, the appointed leader of the disciples after Jesus returned to heaven, he speaks of, "Our beloved brother Paul who wrote letters and scripture." So Paul's letters were immediately received a scripture. He's a pastor to a guy named Luke who travels with him, writes the book of Luke and Acts, and Acts 13:18 or primarily centered on Paul. So he writes 13, maybe 14 books of the New Testament. He is the pastor and traveling companion to Luke who writes by volume the majority of the New Testament more than anyone else. And he is the sort of the focal point of Acts 13:28, in the early church. He's a thought leader. And John Chrysostom, the early church father says, "Put the whole world on one side of the scale. And you will see that the soul of Paul outweighs it." Martin Luther called him the wisest man after Christ. So he's a thought leader. Timothy's a people leader. Timothy gets deployed to build teams, to raise up leaders, to deal with counseling, to resolve conflict. He's a people leader. My question is to you, are you more of a thought leader or a people leader? If in in a church where the pastor is more of a thought leader, they spend a lot of time in their study and preaching and teaching and maybe even writing and doing deep delve content. If your pastor's more of a people leader, they maybe have a preaching team, they get a lot of help with their sermons. Their sermons are shorter and a lot more practical and a lot less theological. Oftentimes the thought leader churches tend to be smaller and go deeper. The people leader churches tend to

be bigger and not to go as deep. And so if you think of it in that way, God just has different leaders to do different things in different ways. Some of you are thought leaders. I'm frankly more of a thought leader. Some of you are people leaders. My wife is way more of a highly relational, extroverted, loving people leader. She leads through relationships. I lead through teaching and content, though I do have relationships and she does do some teaching. But the reason that Paul and Timothy work so well together, you've got the thought leader and then you've got the people leader. So the thought leader is literally writing these books of the Bible, preaching and teaching. And then the people leader is loving and serving and organizing the people locally in relationships as a church family. And the key is to figure out, well, which one am I? And if you're a thought leader, you'll probably get attracted to a church that has a thought leader. But if all the thought leaders go to the same church, there's a lot of theology, but there's not a lot of relationships. If all the people leaders hang out and they don't have any thought leaders, they're gonna love really well, but they're not gonna be very deep in their biblical understanding or doctrine. They're gonna be shallow and maybe even susceptible to false teaching. And so these two men work together and it's a great example. All right, so command number one, first Timothy 1:1-2, The first command, there's gonna be 12 and our 12 times together is find a father. That's the first command. He says chapter 1:1, 1 Timothy, Paul an apostle that's a designated leader of leaders, pastor of pastors. Pastors oversee sheep, apostles oversee shepherds. Apostles have leadership, gifting, convening power. They tend to be thought leaders that other pastors look to. And we have them today. Heads of networks, denominations, influential pastors that are healthy and godly, they would have an apostolic gifting. There were apostles that were chosen because they were eyewitnesses to Jesus. Those are the capital A apostles, there's only 12 of them. And then there are lowercase a apostles that have that gifting to plant churches, do missions work, pastor pastors, lead leaders, run that works, things of that sort. Paul is a capital A apostle, he's writing books of the Bible and he was hand selected by Jesus and saw him risen from the dead. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our savior in Christ Jesus, our hope. "To Timothy my true child, some translations will say, my true son in the faith, grace and mercy and peace from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." Right at the beginning in this simple introduction, Paul addresses the two biggest problems in every generation from his to our own. Number one, people do not have God as their father, their heavenly father. Number two, people do not have a healthy present, godly earthly father. Ultimately, God is a father and he works first and foremost through fathers. This is why the Bible, despite whatever the progressives and the woke joke folk and the liberals and the feminists and the gender spectrum, alphabet soup, nonsense, people will say men matter. That's why the Bible is a patriarchal book. It traces the family genealogy through the fathers. And the Bible talks a lot about fathers and fatherhood. God made us male and female to have sons and daughters and raise them to be men and women, that's the Bible. Now, when it comes to the problem in our world, number one, people are dis disconnected from God, the Father. They don't know that they have a heavenly Father who made them, who has authority over them, who will love and correct and instruct and discipline them. And they don't know that they belong to a father and they're supposed to behave under the authority of a heavenly Father. Number two, there's just a complete crisis and lack of earthly fathers. For the first time in the nation's history in America where I live, the majority of children born to women,

ages 30 and younger are born out of wedlock. There is just an explosion of fatherless homes. It's fatherlessness in many communities and many cities is incredible. And the point is this, you can't have enough therapists, you can't have enough cops, you can't have enough treason, truant officers, you can't have enough jail cells. You can't have enough laws to restrain a fatherless generation of young men. God made men strong and if their strength isn't directed by good men, it'll be misdirected toward evil. And so what we need more than ever is to understand the fatherhood of God and men to act as fathers. And I just want you men to know if you have children, you're invaluable. Your role is significant and we'll talk about it if you don't have an earthly father or a Godly present earthly father, you need to find a spiritual father, that's what Timothy did with Paul. And the best place to find those guys, of course, is in the church. Let me talk first and foremost about God the Father. And this really struck me when I was a dad of a little girl and I was tucking her in bed and I was wrapping her up, I call it wrapping her up like a burrito, tuck her in, sing songs, pray with her, read the Jesus story book Bible to her. And she looked at me and she pulled the covers up. She said, "I'm so thankful I have two daddies." I was like, "Two daddies. What do you mean? Is there something mom hasn't told me?" She's like, "Well, I have a father in heaven and I have a father on earth and they're both my dad." It just struck me like, okay God, the Father has shared his title with me and I am to reflect my heavenly Father to my earthly daughter, that's my job. Incredibly important. And oftentimes, how do I say this? Our view of God is either a projection or a rejection of our earthly Father. If you had a bad earthly dad, you could project that onto God. My dad walked out so apparently my heavenly Father doesn't care about me either. My dad was domineering, overbearing, high controlling. Maybe God is just mean and domineering and overbearing. Maybe my dad took from me and used and abused me. Does that mean my heavenly Father is just always against me? That can be a projection of your earthly father onto your heavenly Father. We're not supposed to do that. And it also shouldn't be a rejection. Sometimes we go the opposite way. You have a dad who's domineering, overbearing and high controlling. So you don't make any rules, you don't lead. You become very passive and you don't lead yourself or your family. Maybe your dad was very passive, very indifferent, didn't protect you. And so you grow up and you become religious and domineering and overbearing and high controlling. A lot of times our view of God is a projection or rejection of our earthly father. We're not supposed to start with our earthly father and then come to a conclusion about our heavenly Father. We're supposed to get to know our heavenly Father and then let him be the standard for fatherhood by which we evaluate our own Father. If you wanna learn more about this, I co-wrote a book with our oldest daughter Ashley, called "Pray Like Jesus." And the whole first half is literally on the fatherhood of God. And what I call a father wound. A father wound is an unhealed hurt or an unforgiven failure or sin from an earthly father or father figure. This could be a grandfather, a coach, a pastor. This also could be a father or an adopted father. And so it begins by getting to know God the Father. That's where Paul begins and for all men, they need to begin with a fatherhood of God. And the truth is, most evangelical churches talk a lot about Jesus, which is great. He is our savior. He is mentioned right here at the beginning as well. If you're in a charismatic or Pentecostal church, you're also gonna hear quite a bit about the Holy Spirit. But it's like we've forgotten the Father. There's not nearly as much teaching and preaching on the fatherhood of God. And I think it's because of a generation with a father wound. And if you're listening, a lot of our time together is gonna be

verbal processing and stuff I talked to my sons about. But if you're listening to me and let's say you're an older guy who's been listening for a while, the truth is you probably have a father wound or had one. I have been kind of a tough big brother for a whole generation of young men. Young men who didn't have a good, healthy, godly earthly father and they weren't going to listen to an older man because of a father wound, but because I was like the the strong big brother, they listened to me and they appreciated the strength and they knew I was trying to help and I do care very deeply for men. And when I was 19, God spoke to me. So Mary Grace preached the Bible trained men and plant churches. So literally from the time I was 19, there's been a supernatural calling and anointing on my ministry to reach men. Most of the people I've baptized men. Historically, most of the people who listen to me online, men. The statistically, the majority of people who have attended my church when I've been the senior pastor, men. Even the marriage podcast at XO with Pastor Jimmy Evans, who's awesome if you don't know him, it's my wife, Grace and I doing a real marriage podcast. The majority of listeners to the marriage podcast men. It's the only marriage podcast I've ever heard of that it's more husbands or potential husbands than wives or potential wives tuning in. There's always been an anointing on my teaching to speak to the heart of men. That being said, now that I'm older, I realize you don't just need a big brother, you need a father and you need to get to know God as father. In the Old Testament, the genealogies, as we discussed, are about fathers, but there's not a ton written about God as father. There's only about 15 times scholars tell us in the Old Testament that God is expressly referred to as a father or an affectionate fatherly terms. Almost all of those are corporate from the nation of Israel, not individual from one man speaking about God as his personal father. Everything transitioned said, probably can't use that word anymore. We wreck the whole world and wreck the word. Everything changed or pivoted, there we go, with the entrance of Jesus Christ. Of course God is the Father and Jesus Christ is the son of God. For men, this is super helpful 'cause now we have a category for loving healthy relationship that's not male, female. A lot of dudes when they come into church, they have a hard time understanding the love of God because the pastor usually is kind of pretty soft well he's the kind of guy that you don't respect. I was talking to a dude at our church recently, he said, "I've got a rule when I pick a pastor in a church and I asked myself, if I walked up and slapped that guy, would he come at me or just take it?" That's what he said. I said, "Well, you don't need to field test your idea. I promise you what the results will be." And in that you walk into the church and they're talking a lot about, that we're like the bride and Jesus is the groom. And if you're a healthy dude who's not trying to be a drag queen and just have Bud Light, be one of your four basic food groups, that just doesn't sound compelling to you wearing a dress and being the bride. What it works for women, women hear about Jesus is the groom and them is the bride. And they're like, "Oh, that's beautiful." As a dude, we connect a lot more with the love of God in that language of Father and Son. And when God the Father, loves Jesus Christ, God the Son. We get that as men you're like, "Oh, you know when I become a dad and I have a son, I love my son. If I have a loving relationship with my heavenly Father, that makes a lot more sense." This is where the different metaphors in the Bible for personal relationship with God are really helpful. Well nonetheless, Jesus' favorite designation for God is Father. In the biographies they're called gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus refers to the fatherhood of God 65 times and he refers to God the Father 100 times in the gospel of John. So just think about that, Matthew, Mark, and



Luke. God is called Father by Jesus 65 times, a 100 times in John, God is called Father. Keep saying it over and over and over. And the word is Abba. In the original Abba means Father. It doesn't mean daddy. There's this whole weird, strange like man bun, a habian beta male trend where dudes are referring to God as daddy God, that's weird. My dad's in his '70s. I love my dad, he's a great man. He loves the Lord. I don't call him daddy 'cause I'm a grown freaking man. That's why. And my sons are all, six foot tall and decent with a pistol and got my voice. And if they called me daddy, I'd have to wonder what kind of abject failure I was. If my daughters who are grown, call me daddy. I'm okay with that. But grown men referring to their father as daddy, it's just weird. Now, father or dad or pops, that makes more sense. It's more reverent and it's less childlike and it's less childish. And the Bible tells us to be childlike, but not to be childish and calling God daddy God, that's not just childlike, that's childish. Paul says, "When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me." You don't refer to daddy God. He's not a sky fairy. God is a father. He sent down rain to flood the earth in the days of Noah. He sent a basically a nuclear strike on Sodom and Gomorrah. He brought down fire in the days of Elijah. Our God is a father, but he's a tough and tender father and he's not. Mr. Rogers up in never, never land, just sitting around in a cardigan, meditating on his feelings while drinking herbal tea, not getting angry about everything or anything. That's just not our father. Our father is tough and tender and he's our father. He's not our daddy God. Nonetheless, when it comes to God, it also says in the Psalms that he's a father to the fatherless. And so even if you didn't have an earthly father or spiritual father or adoptive father or father figure, God is still your father. Pastor Mark here is saying, thank you for giving me the honor of helping you to learn God's word in a world filled with bad news. You need some good news in a world filled with lies, you need some truth. And so as I like to say, "It's all about Jesus." We open the Bible and we help people learn about Jesus Christ. And I just want to say, if you would help me get the word of God out, it would mean the world to me. You can go to [realfaith.com](http://realfaith.com), mountain of Bible teaching. I mean, we're coming up on three decades of Bible teaching and or if you just go to 99383 and text the word unfiltered, again, that's 99383 unfiltered. We'll send you a link that'll open up literally thousands and thousands and thousands of pieces of free Bible teaching.