

My father's son

If the Spirit of God is leading you, then take comfort in knowing you are His children. You see, you have not received a spirit that returns you to slavery, so you have nothing to fear. The Spirit you have received adopts you and welcomes you into God's own family. That's why we call out to Him, "Abba! Father!" as we would address a loving daddy. Through that prayer, God's Spirit confirms in our spirits that we are His children. (Romans 8:14-16)

(NOTE: this post is obviously not PC correct. Get over it! I'm focusing on humankind!)

Without a doubt Brennan Manning, an ex-Jesuit priest, has been the most influential author in the last ten years of my life. Why? He speaks candidly of his own brokenness. I am a broken person, to say the least!

In *Abba's Child* Manning begins by beckoning Christians to come out of hiding, the place to which we retreat out of shame or guilt in the misguided belief that God is berating us as harshly as we are berating ourselves. In that place of hiding, we further nurture our false self, which Manning calls "the impostor."

Our masks, our pretenses, our hypocrisy, our outward displays of saintliness, Manning contends, rob us of the thing we crave the most: intimacy with God the Father. It is only when we shed our false identity and accept the unconditional love of our Abba—our heavenly "Daddy"—that we can experience the passionate love relationship with Him that we have long craved.

Manning's gift as an author lies in his often brutal honesty about his own failures. That's what sets his works apart from those of so many other Christian leaders, the ones who preach authenticity but admit only to their prettier and pettier and

less frequent “mistakes.” Manning is unafraid to expose in print his own sins, including those that are ugly, major and chronic. As a result, he has earned the right to speak into the lives of people **who need to be equally transparent with God about the ugly, major and chronic sins they try so hard to keep hidden.**

“Those who have come face to face with their own brokenness—and those who need to—will find both comfort and hope in *ABBA’S CHILD*, particularly through its many memorable anecdotes and illustrations. Saturated with the themes of God’s grace and love, *ABBA’S CHILD* is one of those treasured books that manages to be profound, challenging, convicting and delightful, all at once” (from the book review by Marcia Ford).

If you are broken as I, here’s a song that perfectly reflects the Scripture above as well as Manning’s interpretation. My prayer is that you will find healing as extravagant as Papa’s love!

I was young when I was told
Take a chance before you’re old
Live a life you’re proud to share
Don’t look back and don’t be scared
Say your prayers and don’t be late
When in doubt, just keep your faith
Learn to walk before you run
And soon you’ll be a man, my son
Now I am right where I belong
I hear your voice and I am strong
I will carry you with me to journey’s
I’ll always be my father’s son
My father’s son
He left me lessons all around
And keep your feet on solid ground
Let your words and honor be
The truth and strength for all the world to see
Now I am right where I belong

I hear your voice and I am strong
I will carry you with me to journey's
 I'll always be my father's son
 My father's son
 Find the one, don't let her go
 In your heart, you'll always know
 Raise your boy to love his mom
 And soon you'll be a man, my son
 Now I am right where I belong
 I hear your voice and I am strong
I will carry you with me to journey's end
 I'll always be my father's son
 My father's son