



The Best Father in the World

Luke 15:11-32

Message Notes by

Dr. Mark Platt

What does the perfect father look like? Television has given us fathers like bigoted Archie Bunker or foolish jerks like Ted Bundy. Ossie Nelson and Ward Cleaver were nice guys, but they had no spiritual underpinnings. The cartoons portray fathers like Dagwood Bumstead, and the movies have George McFly who are bungling idiots.

In Luke 15 is the most famous of all the parables that Jesus told, "The Parable of the Prodigal Son." But actually it is the story of "The Parable of the Waiting Father," because it is the story of God's love for us. It demonstrates how our Heavenly Father loves us. **A real father is like the Almighty Father.** The model for the best father in the world is God the Father.

What is the standard for a real father? What is the measure of the best father in the world? This parable suggests seven characteristics of the best father in the world.

I. The Best Father gives **FREEDOM** (verses 11-13)

1. Freedom is secure.
2. Freedom is loving.

II. The Best Father gives **FOUNDATIONS** (verses 14-19)

1. Give your children faith
2. Give your children wisdom

III. The Best Father is **FAITHFUL** (verse 20)

1. Stay the course.
2. Stand on the hill.

IV. The Best Father is **PHYSICAL** (verses 20, 22-23)

1. Give your children loving words.
2. Give your children loving actions.

V. The Best Father is **FORGIVING** (verses 22-24)

1. Forgive the hurts your children do to you.
2. Forgive the hurts your children do to themselves.

VI. The Best Father is **FAIR** (verses 12, 25-32)

1. You must treat your children fairly.
2. You can never treat your children the same.

VII. The Best Father is **FUN** (verses 24, 32)

1. Celebrate life.
2. Celebrate accomplishments.

Your Response:

1. If you are a dad, in what ways can you be more like "the waiting father?" List the areas you would like to improve as a father. Commit these things to the Lord in prayer.
2. If you are a child, write a handwritten note that thanks your dad for two good things he did for you.
3. If you have wronged and hurt your father in some way, call him, or better yet go see him in person and set things right.
4. If you are a prodigal with your relationship with God, ask for forgiveness right now, repent of your sin, and seek a relationship with God

Resources:

Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper
by James Dobson, Bill McCartney, et al.
The Effective Father by Gordon MacDonald
The Father Connection by Josh McDowell
The Gospel of Luke by William Hendricksen
The Prodigal Son by Henri Nouwen

Southern Gables Church
4001 S. Wadsworth Blvd.
Littleton, CO 80123
sgc.org