



THE POWER OF DAD Wk 1: *Dads Who Let Go* @pastorerichuffman @thestoryhouston www.thestory.church

Welcome to *The Power of Dad*, our new sermon series about our fathers and the fatherhood of God. Father's Day is next week, which brings to the surface all kinds of different emotions for people. Some have great dads and couldn't be more thankful. Others had great dads who are gone now and it hurts. And still others have never known what it's like to have a good father. In just a few lines, sum up your experience with your father or, if applicable, describe your kids' experience with their father. Finally, **if you're a dad, how has the experience of raising kids changed you?**

Fatherhood (and the impact dads have on their kids) has only recently become a subject of sociological inquiry (and still only receives less than 10% of the attention paid to the science of motherhood), but what are studies on fatherhood teaching us about the power of dad?

What do you think about the treatment of dads on TV and the big screen, as well as in modern advertising? Do you think it's really a problem that's had a real effect on men?

What does the Bible say about the fatherhood of God? How is God like a good father?

Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. - Psalm 68:5
But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. - Isaiah 64:8
One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. - Ephesians 4:6



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The greatest example of the fatherhood of God can be found in Jesus' famous story about a man who had two sons. Here's the first part of that story:

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them." Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. - Luke 15:11-16

Why was the younger son's request for his share of the estate such a big deal, in context?

What do we know about the relationship between land ownership and identity in first-century Judea?

What's the meaning of the word *prodigal*, and how does this word apply more to the father than the younger son in the story?

What does Jesus teach us about the **self-restraint** of our Heavenly Father?

Why is it important for good dads to be self-restrained and to honor their kids' free will?

For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. - 2 Timothy 1:7

Our Father loves recklessly, and He refuses to force us to love Him back. He would rather let us go than constrain or coerce us. How does the self-restraint of God sit with you? How do you (or will you) respond to your heavenly Father who recklessly loves you enough to let you go?